# BING

No. 63

1982

Edited by REG BRISTO

## THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY in America unearthed the yellowing, fragile newspaper, THE DAILY LEDGER, Tacoma, Washington, of THURSDAY, May 7, 1903 which showed a modest two-line entry thus:

"A little son arrived May 3 in the home of Mrs. and Mrs.H. L.Crosby."

A more economic announcement can hardly be imagined, offering a profound contrast with the worldwide flaring headlines which announced the tragedy of October 14, 1977.

But then, a considerable legend had been established in the years between those two dates.

"BING": Organ of the International Crosby Circle No. 63 March 1982

Secretary/Editor: REG BRISTO, 7 Greenmeadow Close, CWMBRAN, Gwent NP44 4PJ

Dedicated to the imperishable memory of the one and only BING CROSBY, a great man and a wonderful artist.

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BERT BISHOP, Tideway, Imperial Ave., Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex.
JOHN BASSETT, Bingville, 15 Oast Way Rochford, Essex.

Film Consultants:
FRED REYNOLDS, 69 Heathmere Aven., Yardley, Birmingham B25 8RQ
KEITH PARKINSON, 16 Cartwell Rd., St. Annes, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs.

Chief Publicist: LESLIE GAYLOR, 114 Medina Avenue., NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT

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and KEEPING TRACK


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We were with you last in 1981; now almost a quarter of 1982 has passed. One could be forgiven for saying HOW TIME FLIES! Fly it certainly does. For example: practically every other letter I get (if not more!) earnestly and solicitously implores me to be careful - and not fall on the ice LIKE I DID LAST YEAR. Actually, it was three years ago last Feb18 that I had my calamitous crash down iced steps! Hard to believe? Yes, I find it so - until I think of 3 months in traction, six months on crutches and - until recently - time on sticks! But if you need to check - look back on your BINGS!

And there will be those who feel that Bing's perennial dreaming of a White Christmas - first divulged in 1942, nearly 40 years ago - was amply fulfilled last Christmas - that of 1981! The pedantic might point out that it didn't actually snow on Christmas Day - but it more than made up for that lapse very shortly thereafter. Mind you, not all of us abhorred such a fulfilment...certainly not the kids who were sledging, ski-ing and generally makin' whooppee on the hills around us while we could only lament the years that the locust hath eaten - and make us wish that snowfalls were confined to those pictured on Christmas cards.

And mention of Christmas cards gives us the chance to thank all those thoughtful souls who sent us same -and displayed their usual ingenuity in thinking up 'Bing' and other musical themes for their decoration. Much appreciated, thank you all.

# EDITORIAL

We get the impression - and its most gratifying too - that BING is looked-forward-to as, apart from satisfying the Bing scene as far as possible for our ever-hungry members it is looked for also as a cheerer-upper! We're delighted at this and the way things have turned out.

But it would take a super (or shall we use the modern atomic-age adjective? - MEGA) optimist to view the start of 1982 with anything but acute disfavour if not downright dislike. Even if you rule out the national economic situation - recession as its called - (and that's virtually impossible to do with so much in the way of jobs threatened) - there was, and is, so much more that gave 1982 the worst start we can recall in an age.

We already knew of several members who were spending Christmas in hospital, extending over to the New Year; then the heartfelt wishes for A HAPPY NEW YEAR hadn't died away before the blizzard hit the country, everywhere, but perhaps hardest in Wales. Then we began to hear of members banging their heads on pavements, breaking limbs, bruised and fractured ribs...lifeboat disasters...people falling off mountains, avalanches engulfing others...threats to food supplies, electricity, gas and other amenities.

Then we heard of more serious accidents - and burglaries, one at least reducing one of our members to ruin!

And we all began to think of the Winter of 1946-47 all over again. What's that? You're too young to remember....just as well, and we won't go into it further.

Feeling better? Feeling cheer-up? Well, you should be - for now it is all in the past! Most of us have weathered it. True, its asking for trouble to say the worst is past in Britain until say April or May is here....but we'll keep our fingers crossed.

And in the midst of the snows we had a charming letter from Australia, bemoaning the fact that they were sweltering - and what a pity we couldn't export a few boat-loads of - SNOW! A whimsical idea; we had about 10ft of it they could have had with our heartfelt blessing.

The thaw was tricky for a couple of days - but before that it wasn't easy to hurt oneself - in 10ft of snow!

But, its all in the past now....only this morning we had a letter saying there were shoots on the rose bushes, and the daffodils were about to bloom. Put on a Bing record - and Spring will he here!

# ECHO OF A SHAMING OCCURENCE

The following report appeared in the MIDDLESEX CHRONICLE on 6th Feb last:

BING'S ANTIQUES SOLD 'TO GAIN CONFIDENCE'

A 56-year-old chauffeur who told a Middlesex Crown Court jury that he was a police informer, claimed that he sold stolen antiques worth £19,500 belonging to the late Bing Crosby, to gain the confidence of a gang of art thieves.

Stanley Reginald Addersman, of Bulstrode Rd., Hounslow, was convicted last week of dishonestly assisting in the realisation or disposal of a gold snuff box, a gold and enamel cigarette case and two Russian icons, and of obtaining £1,200 and a carriage clock from Ekstein Ltd., antique dealers of Jermyn Street, S.W.1. by deception.

Mr. Georges Khayat, prosecuting, said that when Bing Crosby was making his last tour of this country in 1977, his flat in Davies Street, Mayfair, was burgled while he was performing at the London Palladium on October 7, six days before he died.

Part of the property stolen were the two icons, the snuff box and cigarette case. In May 1980 Addersman sold the snuff box and case to Ekstein Ltd., for £1,200 and a carriage clock in part exchange. He took the icons to a dealer in Walton Street, Chelsea, leaving them there on sale or return.

Addersman, in evidence, told the jury he had previous convictions and had served two prison sentences, turning police informer in about 1973.

He claimed he was asked by a high-ranking Flying Squad officer if he had any information about stolen art treasures, worth thousands of pounds. He began making enquiries and was asked by a man he met in Soho to sell the Crosby property.

He agreed to do so, thinking he could win the confidence of a gang of art thieves and get more information to give the police.

Judge William Hughes said sentence would be deferred for six months and, ordering Addersman to pay £2,000 compensation to Ekstein Ltd., told him: 'What I do then will depend on what you have done in the meantime.'

With acknowledgements to the MIDDLESEX CHRONICLE.

A shady business which sickened everyone at the time....happily, it in no way soured Bing's regard for Britain and the British people.

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It is, no doubt, difficult to believe, or accept, that there were those, despite Bing's almost universal popularity, willing to cold-bloodedly bank on the certainty of the flat being empty - for Bing was on stage - and steal his property. But, that is the world in which we live.....

# LESLIE IS FIT AND WELL - THANK YOU!

Leslie Gaylor, of course - but its astonishing that this is so. We had reports that he had suffered an accident at work, severe enough for him to lose an eye! As we were awaiting Leslie's contribution for this issue anyway we lost no time in getting in touch with him, hoping that the stories were just rumours. We took the precaution of saying that we realised it might not be possible for him - if the stories were true - to answer personally but that we felt this concern and would like some news, preferably good.

Almost by return of post we had Leslie's reply, in his own characteristic handwriting. And we're still amazed as its content! It read:

"Thank you for your kind letter and your enquiry regarding my welfare. I had not forgotten to tell you of my immediate problems but life has been tremendously hectic - mainly it seems because I have got so well known over the years and in so many different places.

The facts are I did have an accident on January 8 but at home and not at work - the statistics show all the 'best' accidents take place in the home! Briefly, I came into violent contact with, would you believe? a chair! I knew it was pretty serious and at the hospital to which I was immediately taken X-Rays showed there was little to be done except that I 'could grin an bear it'.

I have lost my left eye but everyone says I look and seem my normal self. I can do all the things I did before and there seems no difference. As a matter of fact, that left eye had been blurred and almost inoperative for years. Like most people I relied on the right eye for focussing and close reading. I have been fitted with a temporary 'eye' by two really dedicated ladies at the hospital. People are amazed, they just cannot believe it as I still look the same. I even amaze myself if I glance in a mirror! I can even move it from side to side in unison with the good one. And those two ladies have promised they will fit me up even better in two or three months' time.

I could easily be back at work. In fact I feel guilty, but am using the time to do something I've long wanted to do. I am turning my large front-bedroom into a long-desired "Bing Room". I have so many souvenirs and mementoes put away fairly haphazardly that I have now decided to put them on show, as it were, for any who call. It will take some time - as well as expense - but I feel its worth doing - and it is, as I say, something I've long wanted to do.

I must confess the reaction of those who know of the accident has been fantastic and the sympathy almost overwhelming. I thank them all most sincerely. But, I am all right now - as you will have gathered.

Editor: One hardly knows what to say in face of such cheerful optimism, even unconcern, at the loss of an eye! Surely a most shocking and painful event. We can only marvel at his stoicism and wish him well for the future.

When the youngest of Bing's six sons, NATHANIEL, won the American Amateur Golf Championship, it was a considerable sporting achievement which pleased a lot of people. How it would have affected Bing can fairly easily be imagined: great delight and boundless pride for clearly young Nathaniel has inherited not only Bing's love of that game but his skill as well, for from all accounts Bing was a considerable golfer himself.

And if the non-golfers, indeed, the non-sporting fraternity, mutter it would have been better to have inherited Bing's voice we can only philosophically but accurately observe you cannot inherit, and seldom attain, something that is completely unique.

We take pleasure that young Nathaniel has fulfilled his father's obvious faith in him for now he also inherits a most important responsibility in the world of golf as the following report shows - a special report from the States which appeared in British papers:

NOW ALL EYES WILL BE ON YOUNG NAT CROSBY

SAN DIEGO, Saturday - Nathaniel Crosby, at 20, the youngest of Bing's seven children, will have the last laugh on some of his critics when he hosts the 42nd Bing Crosby National Pro-Am at Pebble Beach, which starts on Thursday.

When young Nat took over from his dad - Bing died from a heart attack in 1977 shortly after a round of golf in Spain - there were several people, particularly in Hollywood show-business, who complained he was too young and inexperienced for the job.

These grumblers snorted even more when the good-natured Nat got talked into giving invitations to some of his home-town high school and college pals around San Francisco.

Invites to the prestigious "Crosby Clambake" have always been like gold-dust. Even Bing had trouble turning down amateurs with phoney handicaps who thought he owed them a favour from his crooning days.

Nathaniel, surrounded by good adviers, including his glamorous mother Kathy, saw the sense of starting to say "Nope" to his chums. After all, he was only a teen-ager and still wet behind the ears, despite being a scratch golfer.

But now everything is different. Nathaniel gained world fame in his own right when he won the US Amateur title in San Francisco last autumn. Fans in Britain watched on TV as he staggered through the early rounds of match-play, recovering several times from being behind, until he reached the final.

In this, he was 4 down with 10 to play against the more-experienced Brian Lindley before he staged a comeback worthy of Gary Player's historic recovery (five down with nine to play) against Tony Lema in the 1965 World Match-Play Championship at Wentworth.

Finally, they played "sudden-death". At the first extra hole, Nathaniel faced a 22ft birdie putt from the front of the green to win. He nervously fingered the contestants' silver badge around his neck, a souvenir given to Bing in the 1940 US Amateur. Then he rolled the long putt straight into the cup for victory.

He leapt around the green with outstretched arms before leaping into his mother's embrace.

So the wheel has turned full circle. And now Nathaniel brings his own special brand of golfing glamour to his famous father's event. And his critics can keep quiet.

When Bing died, one of the most moving tributes was a cartoon showing 'The Old Groaner' swinging away in a starry Heaven, with the simple caption, the title of one of his most famous songs:

'WOULD YOU LIKE TO SWING ON A STAR ?'

The star-swinging, in golfing terms at least, has been left to Nathaniel. "I won't change anything," he says, "except that I'm keener than ever to keep this tournament going well, for charity, and for my father's memory."

Once again he will partner Ben Crenshaw. Once again be will copy his beloved Dad's gestures to the crowds, up there on the mighty headlands above Pebble Beach - blowing kisses to the crowds, giving autographs and smiling good-naturedly through personal remarks like 'Hey Nat, why don't you get your teeth fixed?'

The big difference this time is that now young Nat will be watched with fascinated interest as a crack golfer himself. Despite his extremely boyish appearance and his shy but heart-warming charm, he is a real chip off the old block.

Bing could be chauvinistic, short-tempered and touchy about his lack of education. Nathaniel is mature for his age, a perfectionist in his game and, until this year, has been forced to live in his dad's shadow.

Starting this week, 1982 could be the making of Nathaniel Crosby. He has qualified to play in the US Masters in April, the US Open at Pebble Beach in June and the Open at Troon in July.

"I'm leaving the decision over whether or not to turn pro on the shelf for a while longer," he told me here in California.

Up there among the stars, Bing might well be
tootling another old favourite:

"You've got to accentuate the positive...
don't mess with Mister-in-between....."

**********

Editor: As we said, a considerable achievement and this report contains heart-warming assurances that Nat is going to keep his Dad's name prominent in the world of golf. True, there will not be the odd impromptu chorus of WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING, or the casually whistled bars of WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT....

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And remaining with what might be termed THE SPORTS SECTION (!) a book throws more light on the celebrated Crosby golf-tournaments:

"THE CROSBY - GREATEST SHOW IN GOLF" by Dwayne Netland pub. 1975

...reviewed for us here by JOHN BIGNELL

I have just finished reading the above book thro' the kindness of RENEE CHESTER, a not-too-far-neighbour who must be laying claim to the most prolific collector of Crosbyana. But for Renee I would have been totally unaware of this most interesting book. As the title indicates it is a comprehensive review of the story of the most famous golf tournament in the world outside of the major 'Opens'. It starts, naturally, from the first quite modest affair in 1937

which was won by Sam Snead, who pocketed 500 dollars, to the 1975 'Clambake' at Pebble Beach which was won by Gene Littler - and for which he picked up 37,000 dollars.

But the book - which as far as I can see has never been published in this country - contains much more than mere statistics and includes a fine prologue by Bing himself, many splendid photographs in both black and white and colour, some of which capture the spectacular scenery connected with the golf tournaments. And, of course, all the famous names of golf are there - Palmer, Nicklaus, Tony Lema (who won in 1964 and died in an air crash in 1966), Miller, Weiskopf et al, with in addition, all the celebrity amateurs like Phil Harris, Bob Hope, Jack Lemmon and so many others, making it a veritable roll-call of Hollywood personalities.

> Bing himself, one learns with no little surprise, took part in the tournament only up until 1956. Having seen him perform with so much credit on British courses some twenty years later this 'retirement' seemedin retrospect to have been a little premature. Sadly, it has to be recorded that Bing never figured amongst the winners of the pro-am tournaments he so ably organised - and he played in them 1937 to 1956. His own personal high spot was undoubtedly his 'hole-in-one' at the 16th at Cypress Point in 1947, achieved in a 'social foursome'.

Being a book about Bing and yet another of his unique achievements - his was the first, the most famous and best of all the 'showbiz' golf tournaments, followed by the Bob Hope Classic at San Diego - it contains some excellent Crosby stories; perhaps the best was the one relating the "Crosby thinking" behind the switching of the tournament from Santa Fe to its more famous 'three-course' successor at Pebble Beach, Cypress Point and the Monterey Peninsula Country Club..

Because of World War II, the original tournament died out after 1942 and in 1947 was revived in Monterey. Bing himself had the revolutionary idea of holding a major contest on three courses instead of just Pebble Beach, the original proposal. Tournament President of the PGA, Joe Novak, advised Bing that there was no precedent in the USA for using three courses for the one tournament. Unconvinced, Bing sought out Tournament Director Fred Corcoran who told him: 'They hold the British Open on more than one course - I see no reason why you can't.' So Bing, displaying no doubt that force of personality which made him an all-time winner, had his way and his unique sporting event was well and truly reinstituted.

I found this a fascinating and even important book and I cannot understand why it wasn't issued over here. It surely would have been a good 'seller' in view of Bing's association with golfing here, and Britain's golfing addicts generally, especially as its original publication date would have coincided with the tremendous 'Crosby-Season' Britain enjoyed in the mid-'Seventies. I liked the story of Bing hooking a shot from the fairway into some distant trees whilst playing at Cypress Point. He gazed into the distance where, possibly, his ball was nestling high above the ground in the forestry and with mock dismay said "Anybody seen Johnny Weismuller? He's the only guy who can retrieve that ball!"

For those young enough not to know, Johnny Weissmuller was an early and very famous TARZAN!

A SURPRISE FROM THE VANISHING BELLE VUE - BUT! A MEMBER'S STAR CAPTURE!

We have noted elsewhere that the famous show-centre of Manchester is being demolished. In connection with that sad event, the following was spotted in a Manchester paper:

> "STARS MADE THEIR MARK"
> Star names made an impression on demolition workers at Manchester's Belle Vue leisure complex. They could not bring themselves to smash the mementoes of visits by seven famous men and women to the showground. So they carefully saved the 2ft 6in square flagstones bearing the handprints, footprints and signatures of Omar Sharif, Bing Crosby, Judy Garland, David Jones, Sir John Barbirolli, Bob Hope and Gracie Fields.
> The impressions have been in a wall of the Elizabethan Suite which is being demolished to make way for a Wimpey housing development. The company's site agent, Mr. John Manwaring, pictured with the flags (not in BING - Ed) said: 'It seemed a shame to knock them down. So we carefully removed and cleaned them.'

Full marks to Wimpey's men for a sense of posterity; the picture showed prints in concrete very much on the lines of the Grauman theatre (I think it is) in America.

When member ERIC WEBB, of Stalybridge, Cheshire, saw this .....

> 'I went down to Belle Vue - where of course I saw Bing's show - and asked the site agent for the plaque. He referred me to the PRO at Wimpeys - who readily gave me permission to collect the plaque. I have now got to decide just where I am going to position it.'

Well, it can hardly go on the mantelpiece...and we'll be interested to know where Eric finally sites it! We congratulate him on acquiring an entirely unique souvenir of the Maestro - even if all others in the Manchester area are green with envy!

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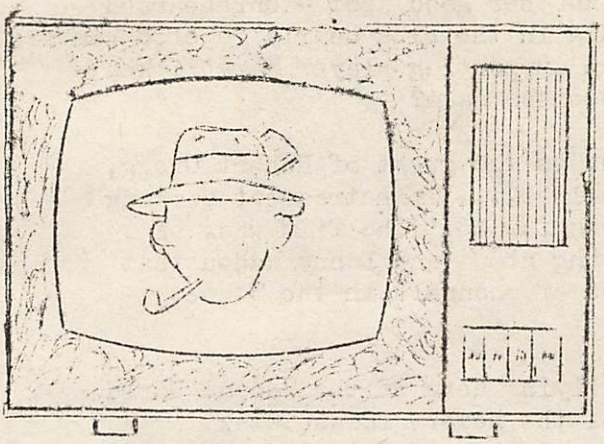
ANOTHER FINE OLD TROUPER PASSES ON....

Members will have read of the passing of STANLEY HOLLOWAY - at a great age. It was only fairly recently, forsooth, that he was appearing on television. In fact, it is believed he was 90. He will certainly be remembered as an all-round entertainer in Britain (and elsewhere) as a concert-party type of artist who always provided a good show. As well remembered as any of his accomplishments, and items which became legendary, were his musical monologues such as SAM, SAM, PICK UP THY MUSKET, ALBERT AND THE LION, WITH HER HEAD TOOKED UNDERNEATH HER ARM, and so on. He appeared in a lot of earlier British films as a character 'comic'.

But almost certainly he is going to be best remembered for the astonishing turn his career took when, nearing the age of 60, he landed the part of Mr. Dolittle in MY FAIR LADY - the success of which - together with his song WITH A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK, became show business history - and Stanley part of that saga.

Some years ago he wrote his autobiography and it proved a most interesting and entertaining story. And it was in this book that Stanley Holloway warmly described meeting Bing in Hollywood. This was quite a casual encounter in the studios but he recalled how friendly Bing had been, treating him as if he were an old and valued friend.

And it was in this book - WITH A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK - that he described in quite novel fashion Bing's vocal attributes as "a saxophone voice"! Come to think of it, it was a good assessment. A baritone sax, perhaps?



# BING ON THE BOX

Television and radio.....

Bing made his contribution to the Christmas entertainment - as always expected. The screening of WHITE CHRISTMAS by the BBC on the Wednesday, 23rd December, 1981, was an appropriate curtain-raiser, a colourful prologue to the Yuletide season. Inevitably there were those who would have preferred HOLIDAY INN if only for a change. Others would have preferred it because it is a more acceptable film!

One correspondent came out and bluntly averred that "the slushy sentimentality of WHITE CHRISTMAS is almost more than I can bear to watch."

And this is a view with which we must - reluctantly - agree with. One cannot help wondering if the principals themselves flinched when playing out that right role of the "old man" general and his desolate winter-holiday establishment suddenly transformed into a No. 1 Broadway show. A battalion or two of war veterans miraculously transported there to show their undying affection for the "old man" takes a bit of stomaching though I suppose it is a pertinent question: What do you do with a general when he stops being a General? When there is no War to indulge him? And, into the bargain, Dean Jagger - normally a fine actor - made a particularly inept and dewy-eyed General Tom Waverley. And the males among us, begging the ladies' aggegate pardons, found it almost as unbelievable that Phil Davis (Danny Kaye) had to be 'tricked' into fancying the delectable Judy Haynes (Vera Ellen).

Having said that, in the interests of complete honesty, we can proceed to the better things - with all of which, of course, we have long been acquainfed. All the while they were their 'professional' selves, the four stars - Bing, Danny, Rosie and Vera - were wonderful. Their attire, their style, their TALENT, combined with the lavish production numbers combined to make everything else seen on the box over Christmas third-rate - village-hall style. A most colourful and beautifully produced film. As a matter of fact, one wonders why this quartet was not used again, possibly in a more credible story, though we should add that while Vera Ellen did her own dancing (in lovely fashion) her songs were put on the soundtrack by Anita Ellis.

Colourful? Indeed, some of the colour was breath-taking, produced in a way that only Hollywood seems to achieve - and not even Hollywood these days.

And it certainly produces memories to savour. My own favourite is when, almost at the end, Bing is giving instructions to the young kids forming the choir. He asks for an "A" and when the little

voice piped up Bing gave one of his deep-throated sighs: "Aah, those were the days...." Its almost un-noticed perhaps but so characteristic of Bing. Surely it was an ad-lib? Another good spot - unrehearsed - was Bing's mirth when an unexpected dig in the ribs nearly doubled him up. Its always good to see that fine supporting player Mary Wickes - how many films has she been in for goodness sake?

> And on radio Danny Kaye was heard, as the guest of Hubert Gregg, talking about making a film with Bing.....'in retrospect working with Bing was one of the highlights for me.' The film was, of course, the one we have been writing about and Danny added that WHITE CHRISTMAS is shewn on scores of channels in the States every Christmas.

Also on radio we heard the legendary flying hero of the Second World War, Sir Douglas Bader as the guest of the Desert Island disc presenter Roy Plumley. Sir Douglas came straight out and declared himself to be a "Crosby man"! Oddly though, he didn't choose a Bing record in his selection tho' he did say he would take a record of a medley of Bing's songs to the mythical Desert Isle.

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Shortly after Christmas Val Doonican had the very pleasant idea to make one of his highly popular TV programmes a "BING" tribute. Sharing in the programme were the American singer, Vic Damone, Dickie Henderson, Marti Webb and a chorus of boys and girls who, it must be said, all certainly appeared to thoroughly enjoy themselves in a welter of songs closely associated with Bing. Val himself is highly popular and a very pleasant performer indeed - and in addition to his guitar he showed that he can play the ocarina (which the Americans call a sweet potato!) in capable fashion. The programme was opened by Val and company adapting the song COUNTRY STYLE to CROSBY STYLE.

There were some eccentric items. The lady vocalist, Marti Webb, sang MORE THAN YOU KNOW, describing it as a big Crosby favourite. It was hardly that. True Bing sang it but the record - in its 78rpm form - was rejected and not issued, until Decca brought out RARE STYLE on Ace of Hearts. It could hardly be described as a big hit, or even a well-known Crosby song. Vic Damone - very well received by the audience - was even wider of the mark when he said his solo effort, THAT RAINY DAY IS HERE, was a big Bing favourite. As far as this writer knows Bing never even sang the song. In the same vein, LAZYBONES was presented as a Crosby favourite but again, tho' he may have sung it on the radio, he didn't put it on commercial record.

Still, that may be considered pedantic criticism so its kinder to remark on the other items. There was might be termed a "golfing" medley with Dickie Henderson which took in STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE, GALLACHER & SHEAN, PUT IT THERE,PAL, and THAT SLY OLD GENTLEMAN. Val took in an 'Irish' medley with ISLE OF INNISFREE and the well-recorded TOO-RAL-LOO-RAL-LOO-RAL in which, as might be expected, he was particularly effective. The chorus joined in with great enthusiasm on songs like MISSISSIPPI MUD, and SWEET POTATO PIPER. Dickie Henderson joined Val for GONE FISHING' having earlier in the programme interpreted WELL, DID YOU EVAH? after a fashion. Other songs given were THERE'S NOTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SUNG ABOUT (adapted), SUNSHINE CAKE, IF I HAD MY WAY, TRUE LOVE, AN APPLE FOR THE TEACHER, SWINGING ON A STAR, NOW YOU HAS JAZZ - and inevitably, WHITE CHRISTMAS, nicely sung by Val.

The programme seemed to be well-received and Val indicated there was

every likelihood he would do a second programme devoted to Crosby songs.

It would be churlish inded to say that the programme was other than very pleasant and certainly well-intentioned. But it showed, perhaps, the great difficulty in giving an entirely satisfactory Crosby programme. Perhaps that is impossible. The memories conjured up by the songs and the inevitable comparisons as regards performance make it a very difficult task indeed.

While there was a long list of songs indubitably associated with Bing how nice it would be to hear a programme that included JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, PLEASE, LOVE IN BLOOM, MAY I?, LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR, JUNE IN JANUARY, HOME ON THE RANGE and others of that halcyon era. But it is NOT the intention to take anything away from Val Doonican's pfaiseworthy effort.

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## A QUESTION OF VALUE FOR MONEY

Remember the Palladium? Bell-Vue Manchester? Guildhall, Preston, Conference Centre at Brighton? Who will forget? But it all came into sharper focus when we came across the following press report:

"FANS FURY AT RIP-OFF:

Hundreds of furious fans stormed the box-office demanding their money back at a Barry Manilow concert. About 500, many hysterical, complained they could not see or hear their idol. And the fans who had paid £10 and more for tickets, were disgusted by prices asked for Manilow souvenirs.
Housewife Dawn Paget, who paid £12.50 for a balcony seat at the Edinburgh show, said "I couldn't hear him sing at all." Dawn, 26, said: "I've been to a lot of concerts but I've never seen a rip-off like this".....Barry Manilow sweatshirts cost £12, and T-Shirts were £4.50. Even badges were £1 and £2.50. The programme cost me £3.50 and it was all pictures. Some people had come from London and at the interval we went to the box-office to demand our money back.... they started signing cheques for refunds but ran out....a policeman who took his wife to see the American star said: "We could only see because we had binoculars!" The back of the hall was about 200 yds from the stage; most theatres have a sloping floor but this one was flat so that the majority only saw the backs of other people's heads. It even took us nearly an hour and a half to get out of the car park afterwards. LAST NIGHT, MANILOW'S MANAGER REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE CHAOS.....

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Editor: More than once we have remarked we are the luckiest 'fans' in the world! Well, well....we're not competent to comment on the 'idol's' merits,only once having caught a fleeting glimpse of him in a TV 'trailer' and we're always as careful as possible to avoid being unjust but it seems fair to say that any magic involved would have to be pretty considerable to make one face the conditions described above.

And magic isn't all that prevalent today, alas.

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The famous and legendary entertainment centre, BELLE VUE, Manchester where as mentioned above, Bing gave one of his great shows, has been forced to close down after more than 50 years existence - yet another victim to the pull of television. Belle Vue has special memories for many Bing admirers, not least our ROY CHAPPELL who met Bing there and had a fine picture taken with the maestro.

# 1945

...1945, 37 years ago...where have all the years gone? will be the thought of those around then... 37 years since the world was celebrating - if that is the word - VE DAY! (Victory in Europe); VJ DAY (Victory over Japan) and the Atom Bomb was still to come, not far away. Although there was natural relief that hostilities had ceased no-one was under any illusions that the repercussions would go on - and on, for years to come. As we duly discovered -- and are still discovering.

Nevertheless, life was going on with a considerable burden lifted. Everybody's life had been changed, irrevocably, for good or ill. Yet attempts were being made to adjust. To be more normal, perhaps. The War of 1939-45, The Second World War, had at least brought Bing Crosby to Europe for the first time after years and years of rumours always unfounded, that BING IS COMING! American singing stars visiting Britain are fairly thick on the ground these days. In fact, some of them seem to spend more time here than they do in the States. Which may indicate something you may care to think about. Bing was always too tied up to get here, and in truth, it took hundreds of thousands of American troops in Europe to bring him here at last.

He had already been the world's major singing - and possibly - film star. He had long been accepted as 'ol BING', or even 'dear Bing'! He had been that major star for - what? 15, 16 years? Already a substantial career was behind him. PLEASE, HERE LIES LOVE, MAY I?, JUNE IN JANUARY were well-loved songs but they were receding while new songs continually took their place. All sung by 'ol Bing..... A year before - 1944 - he had finally got the Hollywood accolade: an OSCAR. Too old for the combat services, Bing had indefatiably toured the theatres of War in person; sung in makeshift camps, carried on recording, carried on making films, worked timelessly at bond-raising - and considerably widened his horizons. Didn't we all?

This story, from April 14, 1945, will give some idea of how Bing was being regarded then and is of particular interest in that the writer, W. H. MOORING, did - in restrospect - get into some of the real Bing. It appeared in PICTUREGOER and we gratefully acknowledge that fact.

Two pictures accompanied the article; one showed Bing holding aloft his 'Oscar' and was captioned: "For most actors Fame is more difficultto handle than Fortune. But our Hollywood correspondent confidently predicts that the Academy Award won't turn Bing Crosby's head." The second picture showed Bing and Barry Fitzgerald in a shot from the film and said: "Here are the two actors, Barry Fitzgerald and Bing Crosby who made GOING MY WAY a memorable film. They have both received Oscars for their performances."

We know younger members love catching up with history by these vintage stories; and those of an age to personalremember the times equally enjoy these reminders of the events.

And the most startling feature of all, it might be considered, is that in 1945 Bing still had virtually another 30 years' in front of him! Story begins ---------->

1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-1945-

# BANG TO THE TOP GOES BING!

Because I have seen an Academy Award ruin so many fine people I usually wish, for those among the Hollywood stars for whom I feel some personal regard, that they may never win an "Oscar".

It isn't so much the Oscar itself, it is the hangers-on who come afterwards.

The year's Academy winner usually finds himself in the same kind of spot as Bill Smith, who draws the winner in the Irish sweepstake. Suddenly looking over his circle of friends he failed to perceive the horizon, there were so many. Propositions of most attractive varieties came tumbling in and the whole world was alive with opportunities to double the draw.

In Hollywood "Oscar" usually means a battle for a new contract at a higher salary, a larger dressing-room, more flunkies and many, many more 'friends'. Fame, probably, is more difficult to handle than fortune.

I don't think, however, we need to worry about Bing Crosby.

For one thing, his fortune is already well and truly made. His business life is 'incorporated' and he is, for all practical financial purposes, a mere signature.

His status with the studios is, and has been for several years, that of a highly profitable star. They cannot give him much homage in Hollywood he has not already tasted.

More than that, he is one of those people nobody could spoil, if only for the reason that he is an inveterate conservative and declines to be affected one way or the other by the rolling tides of celluloidal success.

I don't know anybody in the whole movie business with exactly his approach to the job unless it is Gracie Fields. He goes on, as she does, come Hades and High Water, because he loves it.

He spends his money as freely on those around him - more so, in fact - than upon himself and never developes the slightest interest in social aggrandisement.

I have met him here and now throughout the past eight years and always found him a most interesting fellow. On the other hand I have heard most American newspaper writers say that he is 'gosh-darned awful' as an interview subject.

At home, when he once threw the place open for a charity do, I found him hiding upstairs in the boys' room - playing with an electric train-set.

People downstairs were gushing about him, or waiting eagerly for him to reappear, which he failed to do.

There were so many hot tempers when they left that it amazed me not at all when a few days later I learned that the house had completely burned down.

Bing and the family moved from North Hollywood to Beverly Hills, which home they still occupy alternately with the one they have near the beach at Santa Monica.

Bing Crosby is essentially a family man. It suits him down to the ground to have four sons. By that I don't mean by preference only, but that he looks like a good pal for four boys to have for a father.

Not that he doesn't work hard to keep them in line sometimes. He takes them to church every Sunday morning. Once I saw him arrive with the four boys and a nurse.

The Church of the Good Shepherd was packed but not many took a second glance as Bing found his pew, and the four boys followed him in.

The eldest dug one of the twins in

the ribs and there was almost a scuffle fight right there and then. Bing caught it out of the corner of his eye and his eyebrow wiggled, much like it does when he's about to sing. His eyes dropped towards the boys, then passed along to the nurse and a slight nod of his head told the rest.

THE boys filed liked four cherubs, hands together, towards the confessional!

I guess Bing thought they needed it. From then on they sat like so many statues until it was all over, but you should have seen them run like greased lightning to be the first out of church and into the car. Bing remained casual throught, as he always does.

On another occasion when I spent a day with him on his own racecourse (his horses didn't win a single race!) a party of us had dinner with him after which, as usual, the place was thrown open to the public.

It was a sort of free-and-easy evening in the Del Mar clubhouse and Bing had a good time with the rest.

Then somebody - I forget who - wanted him to make a speech. The next I knew was that he'd disappeared - through a door through which only male autograph-hunters could pursue him.

"Well," said Bing, "come in if you don't mind, neither do I!"

This is in line with his whole attitude to the making of films, the recording of discs, or appearing on the radio. He takes just everything in easy stride.

But I can quite understand why professional interviewers, seeing him individually, would get a bad time of it. He's too unassuming to offer any views. H waits for direct questions and then, being giving naturally to the use of monosyllables, answers sothat he seems to cut them off at the knees.

In a mass interview, he is wonderful. I turned out for the big press reception thrown for Bing when he got back from England and France recently.

His references to the British and French people had about them none of that patronizing ring which so often arouses my ire when stars 'give forth' about the heroism of London, Plymouth, Coventry and scores of other towns that have caught the weight of Hitler's blitzkrieg.

WITHOUT ever knowing it - because he'd be too polite to disparage anyone - he cut down to a minimum the silly sort of questions which always arise on such occasions.

One press man did say, blushingly: "My Syndicate wishes to know what you think of the French women as compared with American women; are they as well-groomed?"

Bing replied: "I guess they are when they've got what it takes." The correspondent coughed and persisted.

"Did they mob you in Paris?" he asked. "Nope," answered Bing, "they didn't know me from Adam, and wouldn't have even if I'd had my toupee on, but they'd sure have mobbed me if I'd been a beefsteak!"

REALISTICALLY, HE PAINTED FOR THESE AMERICAN PRESS PEOPLE A PICTURE OF WHAT WAR REALLY MEANS TO PEOPLE UPON WHOSE HOMES AND LIVES IT LAYS ITS BLIGHT. THERE WAS HUMOUR IN EVERY ANSWER BUT THERE WAS NEVER A MOMENT WHEN HIS DEEP RESPECT AND GENUINE SYMPATHY WAS OBSCURED.

HE WAS TRYING NOT TO BE A WET BLANKET, BUT AT THE SAME TIME HE WASN'T GOING TO LET ANYONE THINK HE HAD FOUND EUROPE AT WAR A PLACE OF HIGH ADVENTURE AND EXCITING ROMANCE.

You might think they'd know, but the fact is many do not. Bing told them. His description of VI, given in a few lines, brought them to silence for a full minute.

Some of them had pictured a flying bomb falling in the street, making a hole and that's all.

"IF ONE FELL HERE," HE EXPLAINED, "THIS WHOLE BUILDING WOULD BE GONE AND FOR TWO FULL BLOCKS ALL AROUND HOUSES WOULD BE DE-ROOFED, TREES UPROOTED, LAMP-POSTS SHATTERED....IT ISN'T PRETTY."

"Do you duck when you hear them coming?" chirped up some young sob sister. "YOU BET I DID.... AND OFTEN WHEN I THOUGHT I HEARD ONE AND DIDN'T."

Shortly after that, Bing left them He had done more to convey to Americans an accurate picture of Europe at war than anyone else I'd ever listened to, not excluding my friends who've come through places like Coventry.

I have not written much about Bing's films because you've seen them and, as he would say, they're all more or less alike.

All except GOING MY WAY which many people at first said he ought not to play. They didn't make allowances for Crosby. He does not rate himself a great actor, but regards himself as an entertainer.

AS A SINGER he certainly has long outlived the opprobrious title of crooner. He's a good straight singer. He is also a competent actor in the sense of being able to express pleasantly and convincingly his own personality in disguise as character.

He is the first to insist that Barry Fitzgerald's performance in GOING MY WAY was something quite different.
It is strange, that after all these years, Bing Crosby should rate Academy honours by stepping slightly cut of line in a choice of story vehicle. For the fact is he did not change his fundamental characterisation one tittle, and he knows it.

I visited Bing many times while he was playing in GOING MY WAY. Every time he would say: "Its not really new stuff; the clothes are different, that's all." And how right he was.

When he was doing HERE COME THE WAVES with Betty Hutton and Sonny Tufts, I was on the set again, this time with two young friends of mine from the R.A.F.
Bing was busy all the time we were there, but when I told him about it later, he was genuinely hurt because I hadn't interrupted him.

"You could have brought them over to me," he said, and made me wish I had.

I merely mentioned to him one day, while he was shooting the Father O'Malley role, that it might be particularly interesting to see how a Catholic story would go in Protestant England.

"Yeah," he said, "I'd like to get a line on that." So, I promised him I'd call for opinions from PICTUREGOER readers, and for my trouble I had a sack of letters to take over to him.

No more can now be received for this purpose but I can promise every one that wrote at the time, that an acknowledgement of some kind will be made by Bing.

He has recently undergone a troublesome time. His wife, Dixie Lee Crosby, was in hospital gravely ill, her life in the balance for over a week and she still is not fully recovered.

Now as I write, Bing has to start on another Father O'Malley role.

Ten days before Leo McCarey was ready to begin shooting, Bing, who hadn't yet had time to glance at the script, rang up Leo and asked: "Who steals the picture this time, Leo?"

Where is there another big star who, long before the story reached that stage, would not have gone through it with a critical eye on his own part, to make sure that he had the best lines and couldn't be "blacked-out" by the rest of the cast? Bing Crosby leaves all that to others.

Even now he rates as Hollywood's male star number one, he isn't in the least likely to change. He is one Hollywood "guy" who wears both

fame and riches with an easy grace.

He's a good fellow, is Bing Crosby.

---

Editor: Allowing for the nature of this article - it is a 'fan' film story - we repeat that the writer nevertheless did in many ways get through to the real Bing. From no matter what era in that long career you read these stories one always finds accentuated Bing's casualness and easygoing nature; his modesty; his disinclination to talk about himself, his belittlement of his own achievements, especially as an actor, his perennial desire to give others any credit, and so on. It was always thus.

But in addition, this story brings out Bing's efforts with his small sons; his dislike of trivial questions at press conferences, his interest in whether his portrayal of a Catholic priest would be received well in Britain but surely most importantly, the obvious and tremendous effect his view of the War in Europe had been. There can be little doubt that his love of Britain, and possibly other European countries, was born during that first spic visit of late 1944.

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For GOING MY WAY, of course, Bing received his 'Oscar' as best actor; Barry Fitzgerald got the one for Best Supporting Actor (and one must say, so well-deserved); Leo McCarey received two awards - For Best Original Motion Picture and Best Director. In addition, the song SWINGIN' ON A STAR won the award for the best film song of the year.

Indeed, this film made an impact in so many directions. For example, in CALL ME LUCKY, Bing's book, he wrote: "His Holiness Pope Pius XII saw the picture several times and wrote a letter in which he described his enjoyment of the film and said he thought it good to have the priesthood so humanised. And also as a result of GOING MY WAY, Paramount signed Bing for a further 10-year contract. A charity premiere of the film was held at the Plaza Cinema in Lower Regent Street, London, just off Piccadilly Circus on 27th July 1944 - with the end of the War in Europe in sight - and raised £4,000 for the Stage Door Canteen Services Fund - at which Bing later sang in person that year.

Other songs in the film apart from the title-song were:

Hail, Alma Mater by Bing and Frank McHugh
The Day after Forever - Bing and Jean Heather
Three Blind Mice by Bing and the Robert Mitchell Boys Choir
Silent Night, Bing and the choir again
That's An Irish Lullaby (Too-Ral-Loo-Ral-Loo-Ral) by Bing and the choir.
Ave Maria by Bing and the choir
Swiingin' on a Star, also by Bing and the boys Choir.

Altogether this film made a considerable impact - even Bob Hope was humorously 'piqued' that Bing had won an Oscar without his 'help'.....

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And as a final word on the 1945 article how pertinent was the paragraph about Bing having long outlived the opprobrious title of crooner!

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Later on in this issue we deal with BING ON THE BOX but as a stray-away from that feature it should be mentioned that Bing and Bob turned up singing PUT IT THERE, PAL from the 'Road to Utopia' film. This was in an Alan Whicker programme when he 'interviewed' Morecambe & Wise and spoke about some of the acts that had influence Britain's major comedy duo.
Eric Morecambe, however, was quick to point out that Bing and Bob were not a double act as such in the way of he and Ernie Wise, or Flanagan & Allan, Abbott & Costello for they both had entirely separate - and brilliant - careers, coming together only on certain occasions and, naturally, for the celebrated Road films.

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From an American paper shortly after Bing's death

# BING CROSBY DIED WITH CONCERN OVER PERVERSION ON TV

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BING CROSBY, a singer and actor who was one of America's most-loved entertainers, carried to the grave a deep concern for the fate of a society he felt was totally glutted with smut and perversion.

As guest-columnist for the Los Angeles HERALD EXAMINER, he wrote on Oct. 15, "I'm worried now. Pornographic pictures, dirty books and magazines seem to be beyond any kind of control. Our local paper carries two pages of lurid ads every day pushing this cretinous fare."

Bing saw the decadence, the dirt and the smut as dangerous to the moral fiber of society, a corrupter of youth. He was deeply saddened that it is almost impossible for a moral person to avoid being tainted by this type of trash.

"Personally," Bing went on, "I deplore this; but if anybody else wants to pay his money to view such rubbish, I suppose its his own business, and he can do as he pleases.

"But TV, I contend, is a very different thing. It comes into the home practically 24 hours a day. It operates under government concession. It is purportedly controlled by the FCC and I firmly believe the commission has done all in its power to influence TV to clean up its program content. Regrettably, without much effect."

Bing saw SOAP, and thought it was pure trash. He was incensed that such pornographic material could be broadcast into the homes of innocent viewers.

Crosby observed: "Very slowly, very subtly, writers and producers are working in nudity, permissiveness, irresponsibility, profanity, scenes of semi-explicit sex, provocative dialogue, smutty innuendoes and situations into their shows. More responsibility is almost indiscernible."

Bing suggested that concerned groups get together to voice their opinions, to instigate change. He proposed they tell the TV advertisers they will no longer buy their products unless they clean up the shows.

"A citizen can say or do anything on the street unless he breaks the law, but he shouldn't be allowed to come into a man's house and fills his TV set with prurient material," Bing blasted. "It certainly is not the type of thing you want your children to see daily. Its effect can't be anything but harmful."

The singer, who died at 76 of a massive heart failure while on a golf course in Spain, was of an age when such smut was not readily

accepted. In his day, children were taught sex was a private matter, that it shouldn't be broadcast to the general public.

"It used to be up to the parents to instill some goals, some values in a child. But so many parents aren't doing that now, and that's why so many kids today are aimless, staring at a TV tube all day long."

Bing ended his solemn plea for morality this way: "It is my fervent prayer that responsible people in the business - people of principle - will exert their influence in an effort to eliminate this highly objectionable material."

Harry Lillis Crosby was a family man, from beginning to end. He truly believed in the sanctity of the institution. His first marriage, to actress Dixie Lee, lasted 22 years and produced four sons (Gary, twins Philip and Dennis, and Lindsay). Dixie died of cancer in 1952, which was Bing's biggest heartbreak.

He married again in 1957, to starlet Kathryn Grant, now 42. They began a family which produced two sons, Nathaniel 15, and Harry 19. They also have a daughter, Mary Frances, 19.

Bing, whom friend Bob Hope dubbed 'the old Groaner' had a career which spanned more than 50 years. He went to Hollywood in 1925 after becoming unhappy with law school and was accepted into Pops Whiteman's band. His relaxed personal singing immediately won the acceptance of millions of Americans.

His jug ears and kind face won him the love and admiration of movie fans. He appeared in 59 films in just 36 years.

Bing's health was a recurring problem in recent years. A ruptured disc from a fall in March, a tumor removed from his lung and an operation to remove a piece of meat from the singer's throat seemed to wear down his resistance.

He was to make a movie comeback in 1978 with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour in THE ROAD TO THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

**********

Editor: The name of that film, never made of course, is pertinent for though Bing was indubitably an aged man, his thinking and his life-style was young - and can anyone doubt the soundness of his views on the subject of the way morals are degenerating today? In yet another interview he remarked that so much in the way of TV productions which showed that marriage - as well as morals - could be dispensed with, was shewn that younger, inexperienced, people watching could not be blamed for thinking that this WAS the way people lived or should live. His point is so valid about TV. Elsewhere, if people feel the need of these things it is up to them, but TV is projected into the home. It may be said that one can always switch off. But is that why people buy TV sets? To have the 'freedom' to switch off simply because parents have no wish to see the televised twisted output of prurient material aimed at their children?

The true irony is that films are subject to censorship - the ones shewn in cinemas that is - whereas TV material is not. And Bing was, of course, referring to the situation in the States though clearly ours is on the same level. What I feel really indignant about is that these purveyors refer to it as "adult entertainment".

Cont....

Surely it is the precise revise -- like small schoolboys scribbling on walls, toilet and otherwise and running off saying "Ya-boo!" It is not difficult to gain the impression that some writers and producers are engaged in a competition to see who can be smuttiest and get away with it - and that's not difficult, it seems. Still, we're preaching and all we wanted to say was that he feel Bing had good cause to be concerned.

---

A BING CROSBY SONG SEARCH — Devised by: LIONEL PAIRPOINT

57 song titles which Bing recorded have all been hidden in the diagram. They have been printed across (backwards or forwards) or up and down, or diagonally, but always in a straight line without letters being skipped. You can use any letters more than once but you don't have to use them all. In fact, when the search is thro'(!) or completed, the unused letters when read from left to right and top to bottom will spell the title of another song connected with Bing.

ABRAHAM
AGAIN
ALL OF MY LIFE
ALWAYS
BAIA
BALI HAI
BALLERINA
BETSY
BLUE
CABARET
CHANGES
CHANGING PARTNERS
CONSTANTLY
CUBA
CYNTHIA
DARDANELLA
DINAH
GIGI
HARRIGAN
HO HUM!
IOWA
KATRINA
LAZY
LIZA
LOVABLE
LULLABY
MANDY
MARIE
MARTA
MARY
MILADY
MINE
OH BUT I DO SING
OHIO
OLD FOLKS
PERSONALITY
PIGALLE
PLEASE
RAMONA
ROSALIE
ROXIE
SEASONS
SHINE
SNOW
SO DO I
SOON
STILL
STYLE
SUGAR
SUNFLOWER
SUNSHINE
SYMPHONY
TALLAHASSEE
TENDERLY
TEMPTATION
THANKS

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| E | L | B | A | V | O | L | V | G | E | Y | L | R | E | D | N | E | T |
| D | L | S | T | E | M | P | T | A | T | I | O | N | O | O | S | W | I |
| A | O | E | U | A | I | E | G | I | S | O | D | O | I | R | O | O | L |
| R | F | T | M | G | L | Y | I | N | Y | E | S | A | E | L | P | L | A |
| D | M | C | A | A | A | L | P | X | C | H | A | N | G | E | S | F | N |
| A | Y | L | L | L | D | R | A | A | O | T | T | A | N | M | S | N | O |
| N | L | U | W | I | Y | I | B | H | A | R | R | I | G | A | N | U | S |
| E | I | L | A | Z | Y | A | U | A | A | O | H | N | W | R | O | S | R |
| L | F | L | Y | A | R | M | C | P | I | S | O | A | R | T | W | N | E |
| L | E | A | S | E | K | O | G | I | N | A | S | N | N | A | G | O | P |
| A | E | B | T | F | A | N | D | U | O | L | H | E | N | I | M | S | R |
| I | I | Y | M | M | I | N | S | I | E | I | I | N | E | O | D | A | A |
| H | R | W | A | G | I | G | I | G | T | E | N | S | T | Y | L | E | W |
| T | A | A | N | O | M | A | R | R | N | U | E | L | L | I | T | S | O |
| N | M | A | D | E | K | N | A | H | T | I | B | A | L | I | H | A | I |
| Y | H | S | Y | M | P | H | O | N | Y | A | S | H | E | U | L | B | H |
| C | O | N | S | T | A | N | T | L | Y | S | K | L | O | F | D | L | O |

All the best - bit too complex for your Editor. But thanks to Lionel; these things take a lot of compiling.

NOTE! As accuracy is of prime importance on the preceding page, the LETTER in the third row down, third from the RIGHT is "S"; this may not be perfectly clear on some copies of the diagram. The last three letters, therefore, read:

S W I

# A CROSBY QUIZ

A WORD SEARCH and a quiz! What a taxing issue? We're sorry for those who tell us they sit down and read BING compulsively in one go - especially when they have the washing, or the planting, on the go! Remember, to begin with NO sleeves, no discographies - just your assaulted grey matter....

1. On which label were the following albums issued? (a) 'Come Rain or Come Shine' (b) 'Seasons (c) 'A Southern Memoir and (d) 'Day Dreaming' ?
2. What two songs describe AUTUMN in 'Seasons' ?
3. Bing made eleven records the title of which began with ; - "Don't..." Can you name six?
4. Decca, of course, is one of the 'giants' in the record world and has, naturally its own what might be termed pukka label; yet its Crosby records were invariably issued under other labels, as many as eight or more. Can you name four?
5. What was Bing's 'profession' in the film WELCOME STRANGER?
6. Although to older members Bing and the Mills Brothers seem combined in legendary fashion, the fact is they made only three commercial recordings together. Name the three.
7. Yes indeed - if you started the day right with tea for two at either Basin Street or even between 18th and 19th on Chestnut St then met Bob White to present an apple for the teacher you might consider that's a'plenty; you might also have one of Bing's celebrated duettists on your mind! Who?
8. Jane Wyman, Joan Fontaine, Grace Kelly, Judy Garland, Joan Bennett, Nicole Maurey, Carole Lombard -- one of these lovely ladies did NOT star in a Crosby film? Which one?
9. Bing played Father O'Malley in two films; the third time he played such a role it was with a different name. Film - and name?
10. In London someone asked Bing about Muriel Lane; he looked blank and said he'd never heard of her. Well, who WAS she?
11. Did Bing make any 'singles' with Rosemary Clooney?
12. Whom of Bing's family(ies) appeared on record with him?
13. Were any 'million-sellers' involved?
14. Bing sang a song VIOLETS & VIOLINS in the film LITTLE BOY LOST; Ken Dodd, the British comedian/singer had a hit with a song which had the same melody but entirely different lyrics. What was Dodd's song entitled?

Some elementary; others hardly so...but don't be dismayed. Answers further on in this issue.

# DISCrosby.

...about Bing records of varying vintage...some oft played, others perhaps seldom played. But all of interest.....

"I would give ten shows a day,
And a midnight matinee....
If I had a talking picture of you."

Its a safe bet that when Bing - and others - were singing this song in 1929 they could have had no inkling of the way in which the whimsical wish was going to be granted. Its doubtful if they even remotely thought about home-movies; certainly they couldn't have dreamed of video-recorders! These have made the old, romantic, dreaming come true in no uncertain manner. There are now thousands of Bing admirers who can indeed give plenty of shows a day and a midnight matinee thanks to this development, yet another in the fantastic world of technology where now nothing seems impossible.

****

This song - recorded by Bing as a "Vocal Refrain" with Paul Whiteman, had a tremendous vogue. It was, of course, inspired by the innovation of 'talking pictures' - or sound movies which replaced the old 'silents'. They themselves - talking films - were a miracle. And still are! If memory serves me correctly, IF I HAD A TALKING PICTURE OF YOU was written for a film which featured two very favourite romantic stars of the times - Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell. Seems they were everyonr's favourites in those days.....another of their well-remembered songs is KEEP YOUR SUNNYSIDE UP though it seems Bing never recorded this one. No doubt older members will recall more songs from this pair.

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When people are discussing Bing's ability to sing jazz - as he does tho' on times the rather futile argument as to whether he did is aired - I doubt very much if the recording of DO YOU EVER THINK OF ME? is mentioned. Which is a pity. The more I hear it the more I like it. Bing is accompanied by The Merry Macs - a quartet of three boys and a girl, very very popular in the late 30's and 40's - plus instrumental accompaniment directed by Victor Young; and if you think it an unlikely vehicle for a jazz performance you may care to listen to it again....with 'new' ears! The accompaniment strongly features a vibraphone and this considerably helps the swing of the record, for in the right hands (essential!) the vibes are a great swinging instrument. The arrangement is quite complex, and full of excellent phrasing yet swings along in beautiful style.

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There is an article reproduced in this issue which tells of Bing's concern over the 'permissive' material that was being shewn on TV, written shortly before his death. One can only wonder what interpretation would be placed on Crosby records entitled GAY LOVE, or I ONLY WANT A BUDDY NOT A SWEETHEART. Sadly, such innocent titles have now been given a different meaning these days to the extent that one has to be very careful about even using the word "gay" in these days when vices are so miraculously converted to virtues.

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It was never necessary to promote Bing's records - not that Decca was ever much concerned with promotion. Even these days they only 'promote' the pop record they hope will sell a million to kids in a couple of weeks. Bing's records sold steadily, if not automatically, for 25 years or so. Then record fashions began to change - newa fellas came on the scene with expert 'exploiters' and, possibly, Bing's records began to sell slightly less automatically. How else explain that some of Bing's most remarkable recordings in the 50's and 60's remain comparatively little known? Two prime examples of this are the remarkable double-album HOW THE WEST WAS WON, and the equally remarkable PEACE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS and THE BLESSING OF ST. FRANCIS.

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It was left to Japan, forsooth, to reissue HOW THE WEST WAS WON; and this has been denied to most members because (a) it is too expensive from such a source and (b) in any case they don't know how to go about getting it. Certainly HOW THE WEST WAS WON contains some fine dialectic narrative by Bing as well as tuneful, unusual, songs - with the bitter-sweet voice of Rosie Clooney and other artists participating.

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The two St. Francis tracks were originally issued on an EP here and subsequently reissued on the Ace of Hearts BELOVED HYMNS album some years ago - original issue was 1954 on the EP. Bing doesn't sing on these two lengthy tracks but narrates, priest-like possibly, in most impressive fashion. His recording of THE PEACE PRAYER was, in fact, the first recording of it ever. Father O'Malley, it may be said, at his best.

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Music for these two religious tracks was by the Rev. Owen da Silva, arranged and conducted by Richard D. Aurandt. There is singing by Father Lorenzo Morales, OFM as well as a big choir. Both the PEACE PRAYER and THE BLESSING OF ST. FRANCIS are most moving perforances and deserve to be more widely known.

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When your Editor - that's me!- used to give the odd talk on Bing to various clubs and institutes, I invariably began with BLUE OF THE NIGHT, PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, WHITE CHRISTMAS and remarked that if one mentioned Bing most people thought of those songs. I then played excerpts from these two St. Francis tracks. The effect was always most profound. And afterwards, people would come and talk to me, usually saying words to the effect that they thought they knew a fair bit about Bing Crosby records - but they had no idea he had made recordings such as that. Throw in Brahms Lullaby, and the Berceuse from Jocelyn and they were really stunned.

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One tends to think of Bing's recordings in the 30's as a cascade of film songs. Cascade there undoubtedly was but it would be a major blunder to think that was all it was. The truth is that Bing made some remarkable records in that period unconnected with films. And included were songs not all that well-known and - possibly why - difficult technically to sing. Take 1938 as an example, a year which would easily constitute a full career for many other singers. A year, moreover, that MIGHT be considered one of Bing's best in that he had changed from the husky, vibrant, often casual innovator and had not yet reached the mature "smooth balladeer" he became.

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To illustrate consider the three songs, DON'T BE THAT WAY, MY REVERIE, and ITS THE DREAMER IN ME. Singing along with these songs, melodious as they are, is not easy. They are full of musical subtleties; indeed, MY REVERIE is based on a Debussy piece of the same name - and Bing is surprisingly, accompanied on this by brother Bob's orchestra! The other two are accompanied by John Scott Trotter.

****

And thereby lies another aspect: there are those who argue that, perhaps because of his very long association with Bing, John Scott Trotter's arrangements became a little stereotyped, a little stylised. Almost predictable, in fact. Well, we're not arguing that point here yet this was the time when JST was fairly fresh with Bing and I venture to suggest that the accompaniment and the arrangements of DON'T BE THAT WAY and ITS THE DREAMER IN ME are more reminiscent of the big swing bands of that era rather than the svelte, smooth, accompaniments JST later became renowned for.

****

Particularly of interest in DON'T BE THAT WAY is the incredible swinging of a powerful trombone section behind Bing. Worthy of the Dorsey Brothers, powerful yet lilting and highly rhythmic. As a matter of fact, the trombones were often to the fore in a JST orchestra. It is not difficult to imagine that the personnel as well as the precise instrumentation of the JST outfit changed much over the years. Strings, of course, were another predominant feature.

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One has never heard of of John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra in any capacity other than with Bing on record or radio - and that, surely, was more than enough for one man! So, he must have selected star musicians as and when he could and relied on ahandful of 'regulars'.

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And the lyrics of the three songs mentioned seem to this writer to be - for the times - particularly 'way-out' in a philosophical vein. Truly songs for the Crosby connoisseur!

"..long as we, see it through,
You'll have me, and I'll have you,
Sweetheart, tomorrow is another day,
Don't you break my heart -
Oh honey please don't be that way!
STOPPIT!

Yes, irrepressibly, Bing gives the band's coda a lyric with that ad lib STOPPIT!

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Yes, 1938 was quite a year in the broadest sense; issue of gas-masks, digging of air-raid shelters, ranting speeches from Germany, annexation of Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, tremendous apprehension, Chamberlain backwards and forwards. Many of us remember it vividly, too vividly perhaps, when we were entering the last year of an era - and things would never be the same again. Many of us not here to even know that.

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But despite all, Bing was making remarkable records as the foregoing will have illustrated. Indeed, looking down the list for 1938 - as all can so easily do now that they have BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD - it must rate as one of the great years.

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The inevitable shape of war looming up no doubt obscured the situation - there were no discographies then! - only the leaflets one might pick up at a gramophone record shop or hearing what friends had picked up. Even what friends had bought or what the BBC was broadcasting! May be the germ of an idea for a series for BING here: A review of each year's records from the start! I must confess when I started mulling over DON'T BE THAT WAY I did NOT realise where it was going to take us.

****

But 1938 also saw - apart from the well-known films' songs such gems as WHEN MOTHER NATURE SINGS HER LULLABY, a remake of HOME ON THE RANGE, SUMMERTIME, SILVER ON THE SAGE, MEXICALI ROSE, YOU MUST HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL BABY, OLD FOLKS, SWEETHEARTS, AH! SWEET MYSTERY OF LIFE, THINE ALONE GYPSY LOVE SONG - all gems of vintage Crosby and many more.

****

It also brought the fabulous MR. GALLACHER & MR. SHEAN! There's a jazz performance for you! And if the 'purists' look askance I would say its not so much WHAT is sung, but the WAY it is sung. This is, of course, an old vaudeville duet brought up to jitterbug times, with Bing as an expert on the vernacular and the very able Johnny Mercer the seeker after knowledge - in a peculiarly plaintive way, too. The very first time I heard this record - late in 1938 - I was astounded at the ease with which Bing swung along with those extemporaneous interjections! And all done so musically. Here was virtually an ad lib performance that could never be repeated in precisely the same way. The "B" version (subsequently issued) shows this to be so true, yet the "B" version is fantastic too. The band even embroiders differently and certainly Bing does. Both great efforts but they knew what they were doing (the record people) when they issued the "A" version. It is peerless.

****

Long as I've been following - and studying - Bing's records, and we know all about the musicians' strikes which caused regrettable gaps in Bing's recording career, I have never seen a reason advanced as to why, in 1935, Bing did no recording between 21 February and 14 August? A six-months' break. In fact, Mr. C. appears to have recorded only 20 songs in that year (a Jubilee year for Britain incidentally) and certainly what should have been a much fuller year as far as recording goes, for Bing.

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ALWAYS WELCOME..INVARIABLY INTERESTING:

# BING "Letters"

Please use the address shewn below.....

HELEN CAIN,14 Windsor Rd., Prescot, M'Side:
My Mum was telling us about when she was five. Her Mum was mad on Bing and he was very handsome and this, apparently made by Grandfather jealous. When my Grandma and Grand-dad took all the family to the cinema to see THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S my grand-dad started insulting Bing, saying he had big ears &c. My Grandma stood up and told all the children to get up and walked out with them in the middle of the film, such was her outrage. My Grand-dad arrived much later and when Grandma asked him where he'd been he replied: "I was watching the film of course - I paid, didn't it?"

Editor: Well, well! I don't know the outcome - whether they all finally saw the funny side of it or whether the acrimony continued. Let's hope they did laugh. But the reason why young Helen's letter is of interest to us is that it was our recollection that dear old Bing (as he certainly was in the 40's) didn't inspire that sort of reaction. Clark Gable, Robert Taylor, Errol Flynn, Franchot Tone and several others certainly did, foolish as it now sounds. But Bing, tho' singing highly romantic songs at times, seem to appeal to boys, girls, Mums & Dads et al. It used to be very clear, also, that Bing shrank from love scenes, torrid or otherwise. In fact, we had the distinct impression Bing had no desire even to kiss his 'leading ladies'. Seems we were not entirely right!

JOHN R. DEVLIN, 955 Plymouth Aven., Apt 401, MONTREAL, Canada:
During a week's vacation last October I had the great opportunity to visit the Paul Whiteman Archives at Williams College in Williamstown, Connecticut, USA. During the visit I found myself playing one of the small 2½-octave pianos Bing and the other two Rhythm Boys used in New York during the late 20's.
Another tremendous souvenir from the visit was seeing the KING OF JAZZ movie from 1930. Seeing the three (Bing, Al and Harry) 'in the flesh' really knocked me out! Bing, so young, with that rich, powerful voice, Al Rinker, the suave, hands-in-pockets laidback member of the trio - and Harry! Bouncing around and providing a pounding rhythm and driving force of electricitywhich permeated the whole atmosphere. Really Great! Apparently, none of the Old Gold Radio Show transcriptions have ever surfaced. Hopefully they will some day, as the Rhythm Boys and Bing himself performed several tunes of the day that were never commercially recorded.

Editor: Interesting - a 2½-octave piano doesn't give a lot of room! We have, of course had KING OF JAZZ on TV here..... If the Whiteman Archives don't have any Old Gold shows there cannot be much hope. Even the late 20's was very early for transcriptions.

Reg Bristo,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN,
GWENT, NP44 4PJ

JOHN STILES, 10 Barnhill, Pinner, Midd'x:

Many thanks for the Christmas issue of BING which was enjoyable as ever. I am afraid I like to read a few pages at a time so that I can look forward to reading BING over as long a period as possible. I was given the BIX 'N' BING album for Christmas and - similarly - have played only one side so far in order to look forward to some recordings as yet unknown to me, four completely new tracks on side 1 and five more to come on side 2. An excellent record. I enjoy the pre-1930 recordings but generally my favourite period is 1930-41. I used to favour the early 30's although I think now its possible to discern more of Bing's character an expression in the post-1935 period with still that 'something' in the upper range of his voice, clearly there in 1941 but less frequently thereafter.

I think if someone fed through a computer the notes that Bing used in recorded songs during 1937-39 the excessive use of certain notes could show why by 1940 his upper range became less musical. Checking with the mini-discography, just about all the 1937 recordings are sung in a high key (or else the songs require a wide range) and 1938/9 recordings I have heard from radio employed Bing's upper range. The results were grand but excessive usage may have caused the voice change. Enough theorising!

> Editor: Fascinating! But first, what of the forbearance in reading BING? The opposite to the lady who leans over the washing-machine on the morning of receipt and goes thro' it from beginning to end..... And put Bing's notes thro' a computer? This age of technology! We've said again and again that Bing's voice had to change. Whose doesn't? As for the usage, we continue to marvel that after more than 50 years' listening and collecting we STILL come across - largely non-commercial - items we'd never heard Bing sing before! The way that man sung can scarcely be understood - I often get th impression that from about 1932 onwards every time he opened his mouth someone stuck a microphone in front of him! Parties, film celebrations, night club engagements, rehearsals, even golf-courses, were not ruled out.
>
> And the miracle remains: up until he died he was singing well; very well indeed. Not "as good as ever" but marvellously well.

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Across the page is a selection we know you especially like: enlightenment for the younger, and reminders for the veterans among us. Again, they show how completely Crosby-minded the world was. The earliest cutting is 1934, confirming that "Bing Crosby was unquestionably the most popular male singer in radio and pictures "..... Then you will see that Roy Fox discovered not just another singer but "...is a 16-year-old Crosby from Sunderland named Sol Gillis".
Sadly, we never heard of Sol - any more than we ever heard of Benny Fields who was "better than Bing Crosby and Harry Richman".... Bing's fantastic success in selling records naturally made all record companies want to find someone to do the same for them....but they disappeared in Bing's wake.

That piece from 1956 about BING'S NEW DISCS is a mystery to us; certainly we heard nothing of it here. Perhaps Stateside members know something of it? We do know of at least one phono-card record on which Bing sang BECAUSE but of no mass-production efforts.

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PETER MONAGHAN, 25 Weir Avenue, Barrhead, Glasgow:
One final word about THE CROSBY YEARS, Ken Barnes's book. Having read it over again I still cannot understand his remarks pertaining to HEY JUDE. For one thing, I remember Bing being interviewed and saying he had hopes for this album and I also remember his saying that the only good thing

(Cont...p. 31

HERE it is 1935 already, so before the present becomes too far distant, it might be a good idea to hesitate briefly to see what changes have taken place in the dance band field since January, 1934.

NEW YOR

Through conducting numerous popularity contests in all parts of the country, radio editors were able to announce at the end of the past year that without doubt the three most popular orchestra leaders were Paul Whiteman, Rudy Vallée, and Guy Lombardo (the same orch. leaders headed previous year's list). Bing Crosby was unquestionably the most popular male singer in radio and pictures.

BING (Boo-ba-do) CROSBY FACES UP TO THINGS!

Pensive

Gay

## BING'S NEW DISCS

● BING CROSBY has formed a new company, Bing Crosby Phonocards, Inc., which will produce paper phonograph records in the form of greeting cards, paper books and direct mail material.

The first order, a multi-million dollar one, came from the Borden Company, the dairy concern. They will use the records as covers on dairy products. The groove contents will be music appropriate for the season.

JUNE '36

# DECCA SIGN NEW VOCAL ACE

## *Benny Fields Records for British Fans*

STATED to be better even than Bing Crosby and Harry Richman, America's newest crooning discovery—forty-year-old Benny Fields—will soon be introduced to British record fans.

This enterprising move has been made by the Decca Co., and the first titles waxed by Benny were *Lost* and *Welcome, Stranger*, which should be available over here about the middle of next month.

# ROY FOX'S NEW CROONING FIND

MAR 135

## *Sol from Sunderland*

DURING his tour of the provinces, Roy Fox has been taking a great interest in local crooners and has been staging various contests to unearth vocal talent.

**One of his latest finds is a sixteen-year-old Crosby from Sunderland named Sol Gillis.**

Some months ago Roy Fox granted Sol a private audition and was sufficiently impressed to advise him to visit Newcastle on the occasion of the band's next "call" there, when Roy had promised to adjudicate at a crooning competition.

Sol enthusiastically turned up, only to find that, as the limited number of entries had been reached, he could not gain admission.

*Fortunately, however, he was able to gain access to Roy Fox, who immediately arranged for him to take his place among the other entrants, and he repaid this act of kindness by winning the contest outright, beating a Whitley Bay girl in the final to do so.*

Sad

In song

1. (a) Philips (b) Polydor (c) London (d) Coral. (*)

2. AUTUMN IN NEW YORK and SEPTEMBER SONG.

3. DON'T be a Do-Badder; - be that Way; - Blame Me; - Break the Spell; - Ever be Afraid to go Home; - Fence Me In; - get Around Much any more; - let a good thing Get Away; - let that Moon Get Away; - Under the Apple Tree; - Somebody need Somebody?; - take your love from me.

4. Ace of Hearts; Brunswick; Coral; London; Vocalion; RCA-Decca; Rca (Victor); Argos. (There may be others).

5. Doctor.

6. SHINE/DINAH/MY HONEY'S LOVIN' ARMS

7. Who else but Connee Boswell? (8 of her Bing records are mentioned)

8. Judy Garland.

9. Father Conroy - SAY ONE FOR ME.

10. Presumably the vocalist in the WOODY HERMAN band of 1941 for she ducted with Bing on WHISTLER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW and LET'S ALL MEET AT MY HOUSE - recorded 30.7.41

11. No.

12. Five of the first family, 4 of the second, in other words, all of them tho' the second family by virtue of the LIVE AT THE PALLADIUM issue. Making a total of 10 was brother Bob, tho' not as a singing partner but with his orchestra.

13. SAM'S SONG and PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY with Gary in 1950.

14. Dodd's song was LOVE IS LIKE A VIOLIN.

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(*) As you will see from 4. above, London and Coral are Decca labels.

ANSWERS TO THE CROSBY QUIZ ON PAGE 22: (turn page up!)

(Cont from p.28): about THOROUGHLY MODERN BING was the cover. Now Ken Barnes states that Bing put his voice over recorded orchestral tracks which would give the lie to the sleeve notes of HEY JUDE which state that Bing received a standing-ovation from hard-boiled studio musicians after having recorded it. Anyway, all this aside I still think HEY JUDE a good album. I also totally disagree with Ken's dismissal of the singalong albums. May be not everyonr's cup of tea - but look what Max Bygraves is doing with this type of album! I think Bing's singalongs are a delight and having put them on cassettes for my local junior football social club I find they are great favourites with the club members.

> Editor: Allowing for one man's meat liable to be another's poison, it must be conceded that very few indeed (if any) have concurred with Ken Barnes's album assessments. We like HEY JUDE very much, too.

ARTHUR C. HOLMES, 33 Grange Hill, Edgware, Midd'x, HA8 9PG:

I certainly enjoyed the Christmas issue, especially perhaps that superb article by John Bignell who most certainly must have touched a few heartstrings with his summary of Bing's last three years. I loved the quiz, too but if honesty must prevail I couldn't answer more than ten.

Bing's records were well-played at Christmas, especially the 1935 SILENT NIGHT/ADESTE FIDELIS. It doesn't matter so much with regard to WHITE CHRISTMAS of 1942 as we have the 1947 version on numerous albums and it is almost identical, but I do wish the 1935 SILENT NIGHT was on LP. My 78 is becoming somewhat scratchy and I think this is one of Bing's loveliest. I think I am right in saying that it is the only record of that beautiful carol to include the verse: 'Child on Heaven, O How Bright'. It is certainly the favourite verse of all of them for me, and Bing with his glorious mid-30's voice makes it tell. I say 'one of Bing's loveliest' Christmas songs but I must link it with three others which make a beautiful quartet: O FIR TREE DARK, O HOLY NIGHT and THE FIRST FAMILY OF CHRISTMAS. And it wasn't until I came to this conclusion that I realised these represent no less than four different decades in Bing's career - the 30's, 40's, 60's and 70's - with just 36 years between SILENT NIGHT and THE FIRST FAMILY OF CHRISTMAS. Truly his star never dimmed.

We really did well from the BBC last year - BIRTH OF THE BLUES - my personal favourite of all Bing's films; WE'RE NOT DRESSING with perhaps the most musical of all scores; IF I HAD MY WAY and that wonderful scene on the roof-top when Bing sang the title song to little Gloria Jean - another unforgettable Crosby moment. Then at Christmas we had WHITE CHRISTMAS. Not one of Bing's best, in my opinion, being spoilt by a sloppy, over-sentimental story but Bing was his usual excellent self and it includes COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS INSTEAD OF SHEEP. And Bing sings the original WHITE CHRISTMAS from the HOLIDAY INN soundtrack over the 'credits' of WHITE CHRISTMAS (film).

This set me wondering just how many times and in what films Bing has sung over the credits at the start of a film? I can think of KING OF JAZZ (apropos of which I have never found a trace of MUSIC HATH CHARMS on record), TWO FOR TONIGHT, BIRTH OF THE BLUES, WHITE CHRISTMAS, and MAN ON FIRE. There are almost certainly more. Some I may have forgotten and one or two like COLLEGE HUMOUR, SHE LOVES ME NOT which I have never seen at all!

Why oh why can't our companies emulate the Japanese in their Bing issues? SWEET MEMORIES OF BING contains seventeen tracks new to micro-groove! And the sleeves the Japanese produce are real stunners. They knock our sleeves into a cocked-hat. Sure it is the record itself that counts but when you can obtain records in sleeves as superb

and as STRONG as the Japanese provide it does make them that little bit more enticing and nice to handle.

I like BIX 'N' BING too; have the tracks elsewhere but none have the clarity of this new album the transferring is really marvellous - I felt, in fact, I was hearing some of them for the first time!

Editor: Arthur covers a lot of ground - and its most interesting that BIX 'N' BING is so appreciated all round, for after all, this material is very early, vocal refrains, in fact. And it is certain there is a lot more difference between the 1935 SILENT NIGHT and more recent versions than there is between the two versions of WHITE CHRISTMAS, e.g. 1942 and 1947. I well recall how we treasured SILENT NIGHT before the War.

Perhaps one of our film consultants can tell us re. Bing singing over film credit titles? One would think ALL Bing films would be so introduced. Not quite the same thing but verging on it was the 1945 film OUT OF THIS WORLD, which featured Eddie Bracken, Veronica Lake (of the hair-over-one-eye fame!) - and the young four Crosby boys; This was a musical film and Eddie Bracken sang OUT OF THIS WORLD, JUNE COMES AROUND EVERY YEAR, and I'D RATHER BE ME - but it was Bing's voice which was dubbed to Bracken's miming! If this ever turns up on TV you'll know the voice!

The 'mystery' of why Japan is issuing so many fine Crosby albums is as baffling as ever. We wrote to MCA and EMI/MCA pointing out this astonishing state of affairs, adding that Germany and France, too, were issuing highly desirable Crosby material while here they remained inert. There was no reply. The continual changing-of-hands that has been going on in the British record industry is undoubtedly a contributory factor - they don't themselves now know who owns what. Remember we had a despairing enquiry from Decca as to what was the number of their record of STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE? as they couldn't find it in their lists; and our - gleeful - reply: No wonder, it belongs to Philips. Decca's sole effort lately was the issue of SENTIMENTAL - composed of tracks all issued within the last 3-4 years on other albums. Abysmal.

But - on films -

JIM HALMS, 17 Ashfield Rd., Finsbury Park, London N4 1NY:
My wife and I went to see the film HOLIDAY INN at the National Film Theatre. A lovely picture this, bubbling throughout with Bing's superb singing, Fred's incredible dancing and their combined delightful delivery of light-hearted comedy. But the real bonus was that the NFT designated this film as 'Junior NFT' - films suitable for junior members. This meant there were naturally a lot of youngsters in the packed audience and it was great to hear the peals of laughter coming from the 'juniors' at the antics of Bing and Fred. Obviously kids with good - and discerning - taste. With young enthusiasts like these there's just GOT to be a big worldwide revival of Bing's films and records one day.

Editor: We certainly think so - and thanks to other members who tell us of NFT showings; and indeed, send us the various items of news that crop up locally.

JIM LOWE, 105 Renfrew Close, Strait Rd., East Ham, London, E6 4PQ:

I saw mention of the "new breed of crooners" in the article in the Christmas issue (pages 22/23) - Gene Austin, Nick Lucas and Vaughn de Leath. I hadn't heard of the last two named until browsing this Sunday at a record sale. Then I spotted this disc UKELELE LADY/BANANA OIL, by Vaugh de Leath. I bought it as a curio and although quite entert-

aining, I wouldn't in my wildest dreams call him a crooner; but the article did state they were 'first breed'. Its amazing to find these records - still in excellent condition - can be found even today. Would be interesting to have an article about early crooners (pre-Bing, Vallee, Columbo &c). Perhaps one of our learned members might attempt this one?

Editor: Well, I contemplated and I cogitated and finally decided that even a loquacious Editor such as I could not be so audacious as to add a 3 or 4 page footnote to Jim's suggestion; especially as I wouldn't presume to categorise myself as learned! But we will... Actually, there isn't too much before the trio Jim Lowe mentions. But, briefly, Vaughn de Leath was a lady, cabaret artist, sometime band singer. Only dedicated and veteran record collectors would know her name. Gene Austin certainly is credited with the first popular million-seller, MY BLUE HEAVEN - but not too much was heard of him - and selling a million was a totally different matter to what it is today, we might add. Nick Lucas is somewhat different in that, into his 80's he is STILL singing and entertaining in the States - unless he died very recently! I mean, in the middle - even in the late - 20's, records were a new industry and all kinds of people were roped in for this new-fangled entertainment. I think it must be conceded that Rudy Vallee was the first 'crooner' to make what might be called an international reputation. In his own book he says: "..I heard this astonishing voice booming out of the loudspeakers singing I FOUND A MILLION DOLLAR BABY - and I knew my days at the top were over." Here again, however, Rudy is still entertaining - and can sometimes be seen on TV in character parts. He doesn't appear to sing these days. You know what happened to Russ Columbo, alas. It can be said at this stage that dance-bands started the big interest in gramophone records - and Bing gave it - the record industry - its biggest stimulus bang in the middle of a world-depression, and really put it on a firm doundation.

JILL STYRING, 13 Royd Aven., Ainley Top, Huddersfield, West Yorks:

I had rather a pleasant surprise just before Christmas. Three of the young girls in our office of the 19-20 age group, whose musical tastes differ from mine, they being very well up on the way-out groups, the majority of which I've never heard of, suddenly announced, quite out of the blue, how much they liked Bing Crosby! Well, I nearly fell off my chair because, frankly, I wouldn't have been surprised if they had told me they'd never heard of Bing. How wroung could I be! And they went on to prove they weren't pulling my leg or putting on an act. They mentioned so many of his songs they liked, what a fine voice he had, and how they loved to see his films on TV - films they didn't mind watching over and over again. In fact, they told me the basic plot of WHITE CHRISTMAS! Though I'm sure they would never regard themselves as 'fans' or even 'appreciators' of Bing, they certainly showed they knew a good deal about Bing and certainly had enthusiasm for him. Perhaps all is not lost?

Editor: Indeed not - nice surprise Jill!

R. A. MORRIS, 35 St. Ives Grove, Leeds, West Yorks: What a memory was brought back for me by the paragraph in the last issue about the Aussie disc-jockey who stirred things up by playing Bing's BLACK MOONLIGHT. Stationed in Iceland between 1940-43 we had a battered old portable

gramophone and about six Bing records including IF I KNEW THEN, THAT SLY OLD GENTLEMAN, MY HONEY'S LOVIN' ARMS, PESSIMISTIC CHARACTER to name a few - and, of course, BLACK MOONLIGHT. I still get a peculiarly melancholy feeling when I hear this song, and I am back in Iceland, gazing across the fjord at the snow-capped mountains on the far side, swirling with mist, and with the Aurora flickering in the black, intensely black, night sky.

It is a very vivid picture and one I will never forget. And this song seemed to have been written to match these surroundings.

They were not very happy days, and yet there is a strong flavour of nostalgia about them, and it is always stirred up by the mention or sound of BLACK MOONLIGHT

I seem to have dwelt at great length on this subject but it is a very powerful memory, and I could go on and on. Maybe all old soldiers are the same.

Editor: Yes, I think they are - with good reason - and so often Bing figures in these heart-catching memories.....

C. WILTSHIRE, 65 Gaston Way, Lavant, Chichester, Sussex: That story, The Greatest Finale, in the last issue reminded me of Bing's last concert at the Brighton Centre. My wife and I sat in the balcony, immediately in front of us sat a party of three the middle one of whom was a grey-haired lady. In the interval the manager, or some official, came and escorted the lady away. I remarked to my wife that it was maybe someone who knew Bing for the lady was treated with deference.
On her return I had a full-face view of her - and, of course, it was 'Our Gracie'. Quite a number of the audience subsequently asked her for her autograph - which she graciously gave. I did not like asking her, for it was my opinion that, like me, she had come for a great night out, just to be entertained by the world's greatest and deserved her privacy.

Editor: It was a particularly happy circumstance that Gracie was at that last concert - and was pictured with Bing in that now historic photograph. In fact, much earlier than that Brighton concert we wondered whether or not these two really memorable artists had met. It was good that they did; they had a lot in common.

GORDON VOGT, 58 Stewart St., 4th Floor studio, Toronto, Ont., Canada:

I wanted to write about how very pleased I was with Lionel Pairpoint's job on the PHILCO SHOWS. Along with Colin Pugh's ALTERNATE TAKE book it is simply the most exciting and original piece of Crosby research there's been in years. I had all but despaired of tracking down the various performances and program details...

Editor: We are justifiably proud of the enormous amount of research into Bing's career we have been able to publish. Colin Pugh and Lionel Pairpoint are the latest examples. Initially we would mention Fred Reynolds, Ralph Harding, Geoff. Milne, Derek Parkes and the late Leslie Phythian and Bob Roberts, all of whom did incredible spadework in compiling the basis for almost all discographys, film books &c. that have appeared over the years. Writing to companies all over the world, often taking years, in such diligent pursuits. Nor must we forget Bert Bishop and John Bassett who have also joined in and added their researching abilities. They have the satisfaction of knowing their efforts have delighted Crosby people all over the world - and indeed, Mr. Crosby himself who so appreciated their efforts.

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Enterprise, in fact, is always being exhibited by so many of our members; take Dick Nettleton of Fakingdon, Oxon, who has had the inspiration to get in touch with the GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS via the BBC with the nomination that Bing should again enter this book of superlatives on account of the mammoth medley of songs which graced his last concerts and thereby the LIVE AT THE PALLADIUM album.

Bing is, of course, already in the book on account of sales of WHITE CHRISTMAS and as "the most successful solo recording artist" for his total sales - which continue to grow.

# NEWS OF BING'S FILM LADIES

OR: "READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY?"

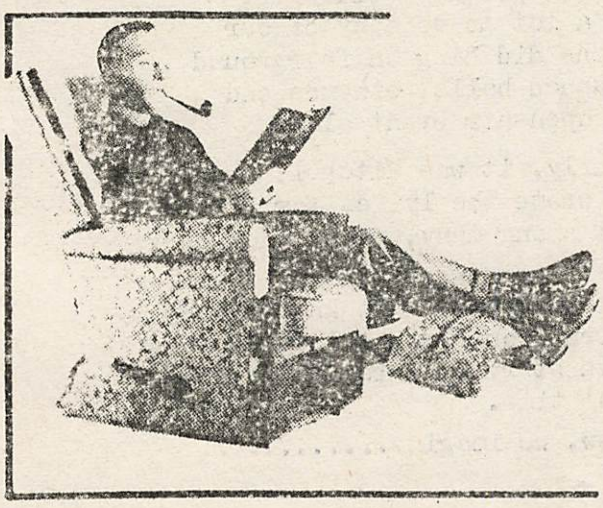
Firstly, there was a newspaper report that Princess Grace (Kelly) is to make a film "come-back" - her last film was HIGH SOCIETY, now no less than 26 years ago.

And two of Bing's co-stars have produced books. MY SIDE OF THE ROAD is the title of a book by Dorothy Lamour 'as told to Dick McInnes'. The dust-jacket has a most seductive picture of the lady in her sarong. Dennis Saville, of 4 Albany Court, London E10 7EI brought the book to our notice and clearly he is Dotty about Dottie. The book deals extensively with Bing and Bob as you might guess and contains many pictures of the famous ROAD trio as well as pictures from Dorothy's private family album. It costs £7.50p and is published by Robson Books Ltd., 28 Poland St., London, WIV 3EB

Ingrid Bergman has also written a book, MY STORY - she was recently in Britain in connection with it and in fact appeared on the Parkinson Show on TV.

The lady tells the story of BELLS OF ST. MARY'S, the film she made with Bing in 1945, second of Bing's Father O'Malley roles, and a big favourite with everyone.- and we might add, particularly appreciated in Southampton!

Ingrid was under contract to David O. Selznick at the time and special arrangements had to be made for her to accept the role. In this book, Miss Bergman relates that as soon as she read the script she loved it and wanted the part. Bearing in mind that she was a considerable star in her own right, it seems Selznick asked her: What on earth will you do while Bing is singing? She replied she would watch him, and watch him!



Ingrid also confirms the story concerning the end of the film. This, as all will know, showed Father O'Malley sending Sister Benedict (Ingrid) away; she was the only one who didn't know it was because she had developed what is known as a lung-condition, and she was under the impression it was because she and Father O'Malley had had many disagreements. But Bing, as we saw, finally couldn't bear to see her go so unhappy and told her the truth. Ingrid says that final scene was shot perfectly; nothing wrong with it at all and it was most moving. But she asked Leo McCarey to shoot it again. Despite assurances that it was all fine, she had her way - and when Bing told her about her lungs, she threw her arms around him and gave him a highly passionate kiss which probably wouldn't have been tolerated in those days between any two stars, leave alone a Catholic father and a Sister! Horrified religious advisers on the set nearly died - until all realised Ingrid (and perhaps Bing?) had been pulling their legs.
As it was, the film did get some minor criticism over the implied relationship though this was easily cast aside. Its fair to say that audiences left the cinemas entirely impressed with the chasteness of what they had seen - as they did with most of Bing's films. The "sweet innocence" of a Crosby film as we saw it described recently in yet another book.

And finally, Jane Wyman has surprisingly turned up on the TV screens in an American serial entitled FALCON CREST. Despite the passing years Jane remains instantly recognisable in her matriarch role.

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# PASSING OF HOAGY CARMICHAEL

The death of the noted songwriter occurred at Christmas last, and we can hardly allow the event to go unremarked in our pages. The associations with Bing are many. Everyone immediately thinks of STARDUST when Hoagy Carmichael is mentioned, said to be the most recorded popular song of all with more than a thousand different interpretations. Bing certainly recorded the song three times - 1931, 1939, and 1954 - and sang it on numerous occasions on the radio.

Oddly enough one seldom, or never, hears the name of Mitchel Parish who wrote the sophisticated lyric to STARDUST yet many believe the lyric is as important as the melody. But Hoagy wrote a long string of what might be termed 'quality' songs - GEORGIA ON MY MIND, OLE BUTTERMILK SKY, BLUE ORCHIDS, LAZY RIVER, ONE MORNING IN MAY, I GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU VERY WELL and many others including the eccentric HONG KONG BLUES. He first mrt Bing in the Whiteman days of Bix Beiderbecke, Joe Venuti, Eddie Lang and other 'immortals' when he was pianist/arranger.

Few of the obituaries that came our way failed to mention Bing, and one we particularly enjoyed was of Los Angeles origin but appearing in an Australian paper - as follows:

"HOAGY STIRS MEMORIES OF MAGICAL STARDUST" -

Hoagy Carmichel died last week and whenever I think of Hoagy I think of my old wind-up gramophone. Yes, Hoagy wrote some great songs but the best of all was STARDUST.
Back in the dreamtime when I was at school I had a portable wind-up gramophone. You could put about 4 spare records in the lid and I used to carry it around.
The sensation of 1938, or was it 1939? was the Bing Crosby version of STARDUST. You got Bing doing DEEP PURPLE on one side and his immortal version of STARDUST on the other.
Our lot went berserk over this record in the same way that the young are insufferable now over the Rolling Stones, AC/DC, Rod Stewart, The Who or whoever.
STARDUST was on the radio all day, and at dance houses, like Powerhouse, you would get it alternatively with IN THE MOOD.

I don't remember how I managed it but that precious portable went North with me in World War II....we would sit under the palm trees on a hot tropical night, looking out to sea....

So we progressed to 12-inch speakers, we set them on great baffle-boards, we acquired tweeters and woofers - and the in-word was hi-fi. The search for perfect high fidelity was like the hunt for the Holy Grail. We have gone stereophonic, quadrophonic, and now it is essential to have those little Japanese tape-players strung around your neck.....

So the hi-fi search goes on. We have beautiful stereo equipment at our place. Half the time I am listening, wondering whether the bass notes are coming through with adequate resonance, whether I should turn the knob to get better frequency on the highs.

You forget that back in 1939 Hoagy Carmichael's STARDUST by Bing never sounded better than it did on the old portable gramophone...

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So true, so telling! One does wonder if the hi-fi fanatics ever listen to the music - in the way of camera enthusiasts who are so concerned with shutters, speeds, filters &c. that they scarcely see their photographs! Bing on an old portable will certainly mean a lot to so many of our members....as did Bing on fairground machines, dance-halls, cinemas and almost any open-air event also.

Coincidentally, it was Mitchel Parish who wrote the lyrics for DEEP PURPLE among many, many other fine songs.

It would be interesting to know which of the modern 'counterparts' mentioned in the above story will be listened to in 50 years' time.

Precious few, we imagine.....

THREE TYPICAL & CHARACTERISTIC STORIES (1) From Ireland

# THE DAY BING TOOK OVER THE CURRAGH

(With grateful acknowledgements to THE SPORTING LIFE)

THE IRISH SCENE
by MICHAEL O'HEHIR

So varied were the interests of Bing Crosby that news of his death brought to mind many different things to many different people.

For me, it recalled a happy day in the sunshine of The Curragh on Irish Sweeps Derby Day in 1965, when as part owner of the winner, Meadow Court, Bing unintentionally upstaged all the equine and riding stars to the sheer delight of the crowd.

A close friend of the partners in the horse, Max Bell and Frank McMahon, Bing had acquired a half-share in him only hours before the race and when Lester Piggott booted him home there was hardly time for them to pull up before Bing was out on the track to lead in the winner.

> Gone was the red tape and regulation of the day and Crosby Rule took over with its natural happiness which spread to the crowd who, even if they did not all back the winner, joined in the jollity.
>
> To top it all Bing sang WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING making it a truly delightful Crosby Day on Derby Day.

Things were not so happy on his next racing visit to Ireland, in fact it was a trip that ended his interest in racing over here. It was in 1967 that the same partnership, Bell-McMahon-Crosby, were owners of a useful colt named Dominion Day, due to run in the Irish Derby.

Bing arrived in Ireland on the previous Thursday to see him run, only to be told that the horse had had to be scratched. He was disappointed in the extreme and did not even go to the race on the Saturday, heading instead to the beautiful golf course at Killarney.

The last time I met Bing was at Royal Ascot in 1976. There was a persistent drizzle and we were sheltering under an awning. As we recalled that wonderful day in 1965 when he took over the Curragh, we were interrupted.

> A tall man, dressed in morning suit and top hat approached.
> "Her Majesty," he said, "has heard that you are here and would very much like you to join her in the Royal Box."

Bing was dressed as casually as any man was at Royal Ascot, light creased blue mac, beige sports trousers, sneakers, and the inevitable hat at an angle.

> "I couldn't go to any Royal Box dressed like this," he replied with natural modesty.

So, the friendly argument developed, the emissary saying that the

casual garb was not an issue and Bing's insisting that it was. Finally, Royalty's wish prevailed and Bing, wife Kathy, and the emissary walked off into the drizzle, the Royal Enclosure and the Royal Box.

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Secondly, from SCOTLAND:

# YOU TELL 'EM BING, SAID SOMEBODY, AND ONE OF THE NICEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD SPOKE THROUGH THE PIPE SMOKE

BY
JOHN EDWARDS
(Daily Mail)

(To whom acknowledgements)

He looked like just another old man on a golf course turning his collar as high as it would go against the wind and squinting along the lengthy fairways which looked as if they'd been made for people who could walk all the way to China.

Bing Crosby wouldn't take anything more at speed now. Not like in the old days. Now he was throttled back in his own autumn and people wanted to be near him among the dunes of Scotland.

An old red cardigan with a hint of burn holes flopped around him and his hat was a worn-white and had been shoved somewhere in the corner of a case.

LOCAL PALS:

Bing, 68, was shrunk a bit with the years and the sun had missed some of the lines on his face and they stood out and made him look tired.

"Yeah," he said, "maybe I am a little tired. You know, I guess I never raised up enough energy to think about it before."

There was a hint of a small stumble in the way he went off and if you were close to him you heard him whistling BLUE OF THE NIGHT, and people would have come until dark just to hear him sing half a bar.

At St. Andrews yesterday they held the Bing Crosby Over 60 Tournament, a kind of easy day's golf for his local pals.

> "Hey, all you young kids, you're not going to put us fellas out on the grass just yet, " he said. And men who had left their surgeries and businesses for one round with Bing laughed and cranked up their swings.

"You tell 'em Bing," somebody said, and the old master spoke through a mist of pipe smoke: "Sure will."

It wasn't in the biggest crowd that he was at his best. It was when he played casually, in the evenings to the small galleries of dog-walkers and heather-gatherers and all those who met him by accident strolling down the course at places like Carnoustie the day before St. Andrews.

> YOU NEVER SEEM TO SHUN THE FANS LIKE MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN YOUR BUSINESS, he was told.
> 'NO, NO,' he said, THEY'RE JUST SOME PEOPLE

COMING OVER FOR A LITTLE CONVERSATION. THEY DON'T DO ANY HARM. WE HAVE SOME NICE TALKS, DON'T WE?'

He put his arm around a little girl and asked her: "Now who are you sweetheart?"

"My name is Margaret Harrington and I go to the school."

"Hey," said Bing, "now that's really good."

Margaret Harrington was in her grey uniform and she put a score sheet under his nose and asked him to sign.

"Its for my granny. She's the one over there."

A woman in a blue dress turned her head away, and there was a smile blushing on her face and it made it go a little pink in the evening sun.

"Hiya, Granny," called Bing. "Come on over."

Granny dipped out of sight behind a bunker and Bing gave out a few notes of another tune and laughed off his stumble.

A little farther on his partner lobbed a muffed shot into a brook and threw his cap angrily at his caddy cart.

"Go on," said Bing, "say it." And he put his hands over his ears telling the people not to listen.

His own five iron shot took one bounce and went into the same brook. You could just see the ball under the mud.

TENS OF MILLIONS

"Go on Bing, say it," shouted his partner and everyone around put their hands over their ears and there was laughter everywhere by the fifteenth green in Carnoustie.

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT HOW BIG YOU WOULD HAVE MADE IT IF YOU WERE JUST STARTING IN THE SINGING BUSINESS? Bing was asked.

"Oh no, have I ever thought about it. Yes, there are a hundred thousand singers in the world today and when I started there were three or four. I'd have been nowhere today." Then there were a few more whistled bars of BLUE OF THE NIGHT.

Nobody knew how many tens of millions he's made in his life and it wasn't important and nobody cared as long as they could get a word with him.

"Would you sign this record for me, please, Mr. Crosby?" a woman asked him, offering an album cover.

Bing looked down at the title and faked an astonished smile. "Bet that you and I are the only ones to remember," he said, putting his name across the picture of himself on the sleeve.

The woman ran off towards the boundary fence, waving it at some people who were looking out of an upstairs window of a cottage in the middle of a row.

A few shots later Bing hit a great chip to the pin and dipped his shoulders to an old couple who applauded.

JUST THEN SEVEN JETS FROM A BASE CLOSE BY CAME OVER THE COURSE IN A FLY PAST FORMATION. BING LOOKED AT THEM GO BY. "HELL, WAS IT THAT GOOD A

A SHOT? he said.

The park was right next to the clubhouse and when he'd finished Bing went over to his own car and changed alongside it like the golfers do at the public courses and nobody would ever expect a man like Bing Crosby to do the same.

He didn't ask for the police to put a circle round him or the club secretary to clear the area and bring in some toughs. All he did was change where people could watch him and keep talking to him.

Then he went into a bar and bought drinks and what you heard them saying was very much the truth which was that Bing Crosby must be one of the nicest people in the whole world.

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Editor: Something of which we have all long been aware, which makes it all the more reprehensible that some unknown 'authors' attempted to write what may at best be termed an unkind book! But Bing's modesty - genuine of course - did lead him to make some rather absurd remarks! Take that one about him not making it today because there are a hundred thousand singers in the world today...when I started there were only three or four. Totally ridiculous tho' Bing really did seem to see it that way. There were just as many aspiring singers in the world then as now - most of them imitating Bing! It is true, I suppose, that its a lot easier to be a superstar today - but then, most of them are light-years away from Bing's talents.

And third in this series of cameos, one from Bing's own country, a columnist in the States who, to complement the stories above of Bing on the race-courses and the golf-courses of Ireland, Scotland and England, is a war-time remembrance of Mr. Crosby: with our usual grateful acknowledgements.

# ABOUT BING

by ROYAL BROUGHAM.....

There's a new golden voice in the big choir in the sky. And Christmas will never be the same without the greatly loved old crooner thrilling millions with his dream about a White Christmas.

Everyone who knew Der Bingle has a story about Crosby, who died playing the game he loved. Mine is about the War years when the kindly Tacoma-born entertainer gave so much of himself to make others happy.

Your old neighbor picked him up at the Tacoma Country Club and we wheeled up to Seattle for several appearances. The first stop was at down-town Victory Square. We didn't expect more than a couple of hundred people as Bing's appearance had received hardly any advance notice.

As we turned into University Street, Crosby whistled and said: "Hey! Look at that mob!"

There were five, or maybe ten, thousand jammed in front of the platform, curb to curb with hundreds more leaning from every window of the surrounding buildings.

"We gotta put on a show for these people," Bing

remarked to his friend, Phil Silvers.

And did he ever. First there was a monologue, a ballad, and then the two masters of slapstick comedy sailed into their hilarious spoof of a radio dandruff commercial. Tossing aside their coats, they clinched and briskly massaged each other's scalp.

Next stop was the hole-in-one golf tournament on Beacon Hill, where the lovable crooner hit a few balls, posed for pictures and then headed for Sand Point. There he entertained the Naval combat fliers back from the war front. Although nearly totally exhausted from the long day, he didn't leave until the last pilot had hit the hay.

We'll forget Elvis Presley and maybe even Bob Hope when his time is up. But Bing will always be a lovable, lasting legend.

(SEATTLE POST INTELLIGENCE) **********
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Editor: Phil Silvers, of course, being the comic virtuoso of the immortal SGT. BILKOnow being re-run by the BBC for the umpteenth time; and it remains as fresh and hilarious as ever - and in black and white, giving a guide as to its age. Phil was also used, as we learned some time back, to 'warm-up' the audience for some of Bing's radio shows.

Millions of memories of Bing - literally millions - when you think about it. The three given above are what might be termed 'professional' memory-stories. A few years back, THE STAR newspaper of Sheffield invited its readers to send in their memories of Bing. They were rather shattered at the number of letters that poured in; and so were we for of all those hundreds of letters (scores were published) we did not recognise any as a member of the ICC! This merely indicates just how universal was the appeal of Mr. Crosby. The following are just a few of those 'amateur' memories as distinct from the three given above.

The record which means so much to me is POOR OLD ROVER because, being a great animal lover, we had just lost our little Scottie dog because of old age and we in the family were very upset. I was landlady of a public house at the time and one old man who was on pension bought this record for me because he knew how upset we were. The words of the record meant so much and I played it and played it, and got a lot of comfort from it. I think especially because it was the one and only Bing who was singing it.

Apart from this one which means so much to me every other record is a winner because there will never be another Bing.

Mrs. J. Sanderson, Elsecar.

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Bing Crosby's song JUNE IN JANUARY will always remind me of the 30's. My pal came second in a talent contest held at the Heeley Green theatre, singing this number in the Crosby style.

Shortly afterwards he competed against the winner at the City Hall Ballroom and the position was reversed. My pal's father kept a pub and it had an extension speaker from the livingroom radiogram to the pub passageway. This avoided a music license. An electrician fixed

up some makeshift equipment enabling us to put on a Crosby record and we crooned during the period when Bing wasn't singing - his whistling bits. We enjoyed it - can't say about the pub customers!

A. Best (Little Norton Av. Sheffield)

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With a temperature of 125 deg.F it hardly seemed like Christmas and the port of Massawa on the Red Sea was anything but festive and yet in spite of the heat we had celebrated in the traditional way.

All afternoon we had relaxed on the beach and now the short tropical evening was quickly drawing to a close. As we watched, the sun slowly sank beyond the horizon leaving a wake of glowing gold and within minutes the surrounding hills were enveloped in darkness.

The sea was now the deepest of blue streaked with the last of the sunset and at that moment someone started up the ancient gramophone and Bing's WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT echoed across the sand.

Never was a song more appropriate and it was a moment none of us could ever forget.

A. G. Morrison (Steward Gate, Bamcord).

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Clearing out the junk in the attics a few weeks ago, I found an old diary and the entry for Friday, February 28, 1947 read: 'Yet more snow, 6-10ft drifts. Went to Odeon to see Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire in 'Blue Skies'. The winter of 1946/7 was exceptionally severe, as many will remember. I was living in a remote country district at the time and on Monday, January 27, 1947 I left home for work in the town some eight miles distant - and I wasn't able to return home again until March 17, as the village was cut off by heavy drifts.

During the seven weeks I found accommodation in the town where I worked, which was within walking distance of the local cinema. Consequently I spent quite a lot of my leisure time there.

On the night in question (Feb 28) the weather was really vile, all buses and trains had stopped running. For approximately one hour of that evening's performance, I was the only 'customer' in the cinema and my magic moment was dear old Bing singing BLUE SKIES just for me. I had him all to myself. Aaah!

(Mrs. Amy Archer, Grange Crescent).

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The record of Bing Crosby which brings back most memories for me is one which is not often heard - START THE DAY RIGHT. When I was stationed on the North Front at Gibraltar with the Fleet Air Arm during the War, instead of the usual 'Wakey! Wakey!' we were roused each morning with a record played over the Tannoy system.
This record of Bing Crosby was played on alternate mornings and as the hands went to breakfast you could hear them singing: 'Out of the bedroom into the kitchen', 'Breakfast is there - ho-de-ho start the day right' - and all trying to imitate the old crooner himself. What a grand lot of chaps they were. And Bing!

Wilfred Kay (Sheffield)

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Memories, memories, memories. Endless memories. Although it would be great to think that as a result of his experiences, especially during the last three years of his life in Britain, Bing did get some idea of just what he had meant to so many millions, I feel it is doubtful that he ever did really understand what he had achieved.....

# TRADING POST

This is the market-place for Crosbyana.. records, tapes, books, pictures, etc., etc., and entries are FREE, though there is a nominal charge of £1.00 for non-Bing entries. Members should endeavour to keep their entries within a maximum of six lines; where they wish to dispose of large numbers of records, they should invite stamped, addressed envelopes for lists. We print all items in good faith and rely on the integrity of 'Crosby people'; it is up to members themselves to ensure that they are either offering or accepting a fair deal. Finally, intended entries should be written on a separate sheet of paper to help collation and ensure insertion.

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BRIAN JONES, 23 Plas Rd., Fleur-de-Lis, Blackwood, Gwent, NP2 1RJ:
For Sale: 35 Bing LP's. Send SAE for list

A.E.(Bert) WILLIAMS, 16 Caithness Dr. Crosby, Liverpool, M'Side L23 ORQ:
I am short of parts 5 & 9 of the Bing life-story broadcast by the BBC a few years ago. Can anyone let me have a cassette of each please?

DAVID WEBSTER, Ardnish, The Ness, Fortrose, Ross-Shire: Can someone come to my rescue with tapes of ROAD TO SINGAPORE and ZANZIBAR? I have all the rest! I have a modest collection of Bing and a big collection of Jazz records - which may come in useful for a deal!

Editor: I imagine David requires video tapes tho' he didn't make that clear.

KEN CROSSLAND, 10 Brownes Rd., Bingham, Notts, NG13 8EF: Sale or trade invited for:
US MCA Shillelaghs & Shamrocks (Mint)
US MCA WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING "
US Vocalion BING CROSBY SINGS (Mint)
US Atlantic Geraldin, Don't Fight that Feeling (Mint)
UK Reprise ROBIN & THE 7 HOODS (Exc) (sountrack).

GEORGE HARWOOD, 5 Glebe Rd., Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 9DS: Complete LP collection for sale, preferably as a whole but will split. Over 1200 LPs, mainly middle-of-the-road. 115 Bing, then Sinatra, Como, Andy Williams etc. Many orchestral and boxed sets. All in pristine condition. Lists 50p please.

ERNEST TURNER, 19 Princeway, Frodsham, Warrington, WA6 6RH wishes to obtain records/recordings of deleted items by Rosemary Clooney - Doris Day - Jo Stafford and Vic Damone.

TIM MORGERETH, 1906 Codd Avenue, Balto., MD 21222, USA wants to buy any label 78s U.S. or foreign. ALL ENQUIRIES answered. Have copy of Ted Crosby's bio for trade for any of the following: Okeh 40979, 41181, 41188, 41228, Bruns. 20105,20106, 20109.

MRS. ANNE ANDREWS, 9 Elderslie Close, Eden Park, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3BB has at least 2000 78s for sale (late husband's collection); and a great many tapes and albums. Callers only please.
Editor: Mrs. Andrews nor her late husband were members but feel we may be interested. Doesn't say how many Bing 78s are involved. If nearby, worth investigating.

MR. A. KNIBBS, 10 Station St. East., Coventry rather wistfully asks if anyone

is still chasing book-researchers for CALL ME LUCKY would they add his name to the list please?

FERNANDO CALDAS, SQS 111-E, apt. 102, Brasilia, DF - BRAZIL: Is ready to exchange Bing records pressed in Brazil (both 78s and LPs) for (a) Special edition Bing LPs (b) dance bands (late 20's, early 30's) LPs pressed before 1975 (c) First-class tapings of the above. NOTE: Brazilian Crosby records are aimed for those who may care for foreign pressings, no special tracks were pressed here. PLEASE REPLY TO FERNANDO as follows:

P.O.Box 07-0477, Brasilia, DF., BRAZIL.

THE CROSBY YEARS, by Ken Barnes, now costs £10.95 plus postage from the publishers. The Secretary has a few copies available at £10.00, post paid. (Overseas ask for rate please)

The ICC Mini-Discography remains available at £2.00 post paid; is most useful for notes and 'marking off' records held, rather than deface BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD, the hard-back volume which confains both

THE DISCOGRAPHY and
THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY

A veritable mine of browsing Crosby material. BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD is obtainable from:

JOHN JOYCE (BOOKBINDERS),
SaltmeadowsRd., GATESHEAD,
Tyne & Wear, NE8 3AH.

All remittances MUST be made payable to JOHN JOYCE/ICC ACCOUNT.
Price to UK members is £3.50 post paid OVERSEAS MEMBERS: European £4.00; Australian £4.50, surface mail; AIRMAIL £6.50. US/CANADIAN £4.00 surface mail; £6.00 AIRMAIL. All remittances MUST be in sterling.

We need hardly add that NO Crosby admirer should be without this 'bible' of Crosbyana. It lists all Bing's recordings from 1926 to 1977 in date order; and then in alphabetical order including accompanying orchestras &c. Note BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD is available from John Joyce as shewn; other publications mentioned from the Secretary, REG BRISTO - see front of magazine for address. These other publications still available include:

THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY by Colin Pugh; a skilled analysis of the varying 'takes' issued of Bing's records. This costs £2.50 UK and European. American/Canadian 6 dollars surface mail, 8 dollars airmail Australian members must interpret £4.00 to their rate for airmail posting, £3.00 for surface.

PHILCO RADIO TIMES by Lionel Pairpoint is available at the same price as above. This is a highly entertaining listing of 104 Bing Crosby Philco radio shows, with song titles, guests, patter and extensive notes.

Because BING goes literally world-wide it is difficult to be precise about costs; for this reason we have found ourselves getting in the 'red' and we ask overseas members to bear in mind the extra cost over and above UK rates for sending these publications overseas.

SOUVENIR PROGRAMMES OF BING'S 1977 London Palladium show - special, full-colour issue are available from JOHN BASSETT, 'Bingville', 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex, SS4 1RZ. Price £3.00 each post paid, OR two for £5.00 post paid should anyone desire spares.

R.S.(Bob) JONES, 39 Gladstone Str; Hebburn, Tyne & Wear NE31 2XD is always interested if anyone has records, 78s, EPs or LPs for sale - and other Crosbyana.

!An unexpected reserve of the LPography of Bing (listing more than 1000 LPs with which Bing has been associated) has been discovered. Price £2.50 post paid, UK., equivalent Europe; America/Canada 8 dollars surface mail, 10 dollars airmail!

BING ties are available from THE BADGE CENTRE, 45 Ropergate, Pontefract, West Yorks, WF8 1JY in navy or maroon with the Bing 'motif' set to fall about 3-4 inches below the knot: Price is £2.50 P & P paid:

2-hr tapes of Bing, including all JOHN SALISBURY (US) radio shows, Bob Machliss's (Australia) programmes, rare items of Crosbyana, Western, Hawaiian and seasonal memoirs available on good C120 cassettes - usually SONY, price £3.00 UK post free.

(Cont....

Open-reel tapes also available. Send medium-sized SAE to Arnold Baker, 48 Groomsport Rd., Bangor, Co. Down, N. Ireland, BT20 5LR for catalogue of all tapes.

If you are interested in the golden age of dance bands, especially British bands, and singers, such as Ambrose, Roy Fox, Harry Roy, Al Bowlly, Denny Dennis, Sam Browne, Elsie Carlisle send to the Secretary for a complimentary copy of THE GOLDEN YEARS.

BARRY SANDERCOCK, 10 Captain Cook Close, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks: Would anyone possessing it consider loaning me THE BING CROSBY STYLE by Dr. J.T.H.Mize. It would, naturally, be guarded and treated like the Crown Jewels. In return I have THE INCREDIBLE CROSBY by Barry Ulanov. (1948) should they want it.

IN THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE Mr. A.C. PRESTON of Hazel Grove, Stockport, gave us news of the current price of the US Readers Digest set, BING SINGS AGAIN - which amounted to 32.96 dollars plus 6.10 dollars surface postage. He now tells us that the set arrived and he had to pay a further £5.43p in respect of Customs, VAT and Post Office clearance (the latter is a new one on us!) - but happily, Alec still considers the total of nine LPs good value.

RON McCORMICK, 15 Glebelands Rd., Knutsford, Ches: Does anyone have a video-recording of the Parkinson/Bing show? Would appreciate hearing, with a view to obtaining a copy.

MR. BILL LIEVSEY, 28 Railway Terrace, Brierfield, Burnley, Lancs finds himself pressed for space and offers BING from March, 1970 onwards - offers direct to Bill please.

MRS. RENE CHESTER, 48 Milton Road, Hanwell, London, W7, astoundingly, now needs only four - GOING HOLLYWOOD, TOP O' THE MORNING, HERE IS MY HEART and ANYTHING GOES (1936) to have a complete collection of all Bing's films! Sounds incredible, doesn't it - we're talking about video, of course. Rene must be on her own in Britain, at least. Rene also has a vast collection of sound-cassettes and is willing to share her treasures with other members. Write with SAE for information on either sound or video cassettes.

**S P E C I A L**

As a result of her visit to the States last year principally for the unveiling of Bing's statue at Gonzaga University, Rene Chester has a large and interesting collection of coloured photographs of the event. By arrangement with the ICC Rene is offering a set of 5 photographs for £1.50p, post paid. These feature an excellent picture of the statue and pictures of Kathryn Crosby, Jimmy Van Heusen, Phil Harris, and Roy Chappell. These were introduced at Leeds last Sept. and it was the intention to advertise this special offer in the Christmas issue of BING. Unfortunately, it was inadvertently omitted. Please write direct to Rene at the address in preceding column.

JACK SOUTHER, 2011 44th Aven., San Francisco, Calif. USA welcomes correspondents with a view to sale/trade of vintage Bing records and others of the 30's etc., books, sheet music and other memorabilia.

"For me, Bing Crosby brought a wealth of quality to popular singing. Not heard before and, as far as I'm concerned, not since. In fact, if it hadn't been for Bing I doubt very much if the so-called popular songs would have too much appeal for me. The more classical style, opera especially, appeals to me but Bing did invest songs with a very individual and peculiar appeal - even beauty..."

*** Snippet from a letter which so appeals to us and which, alas, the writer said was personal to the Editor and not for publication. We're not breaking this request, we trust, by including this so pertinent obsergation.

When writing to the Editor it must be borne in mind the letter is liable to be printed. Please say if this is NOT desired - we do try and eliminate personal items of no relevance to readers generally.

# LEGEND MUSIC

Legend House, 153 Francklyn Gardens, Edgware, Middx
(Phone 01-958-4326

It has been necessary to fall in with postage increases: 1 LP 80p; 2 LPs £1.20 plus 35p for each further LP.

RCA. 20011/12 YOUNG BING CROSBY: 25 tracks inc. the the unreleased on LP 1960 tracks with Bob Thompson Orch. This LP is different from LP same title, Jap import. 2 LP set £15.00 + P & P
MCA VIM 5582 SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS Jap reissue £8.50 + P & P
BROOKVILLE C2-11003 THE GREAT ONES, with Bing Crosby, Judy Garland, Doris Day, Dick Haymes and others, 2 LP set £7.00 + P & P
MCA VIM 9521/22 SWEET MEMORIES OF BING CROSBY Jap import 2LP set (£15.00 + P & P
CAL IBAN 6007 VARIETY GIRL: contains soundtrack material incl. Bing and Bob Hope £5.00 + P & P
CAL IBAN 6025 KING OF JAZZ film soundtrack stars Rhythm Boys £5.00 + P & P
(NOTE: Quality of above 2 varies)
SPOKANE 20 DER BINGLE VOL 3 £4.95 + P & P
REPRISE P10860R ROBIN & 7 HOODS FILM S/T Jap. import £7.50 + P & P
PHILLIPS 6641 923 SONGS OF A LIFETIME 2 LP set £3.79 + P& P
MAGIC AWE 1 BING'S MAGIC £1.99 + P & P
GRAPPENHAUSER GRAP 1001 MUSIC,MUSIC,MUSIC (All Bing) special £2.50 + P & P
LIMITED EDITION 147 BING & HOPALONG CASSIDY £3.95 + P & P
" " 151 BING, MARLENE DIETRICH,TALLULAH BANKHEAD £3.95 + P & P
" " 221 BING, GROUCHO MARX, M. CHEVALIER £3.95 + P & P
" " 237 BING AND DOROTHY LAMOUR £3.95 + P & P
" " 239 BING, LUCILLE BALL, SPIKE JONES £3.95 + P & P
" " 128 BING'S 1st broadcast(new cover, sleeve notes) £3.95
" " 252 BING & JIMMY DURANTE £3.95 + P & P
" " 253 BING, DUKE ELLINGTON, NAT KING COLE £2.95 + P & P
SOOTHAM 004 BING & BORIS KARLOSS + 12 tracks vocals £4.25 + P & P
KOALA 14129 SWING WITH BING £2.95 + P & P
" 14207 YOU KEEP COMING BACK LIKE A SONG £2.95 + P & P

RECORD DISCOGRAPHIES (BOOKS) BING CROSBY, CREMO SINGER VOL II Nov. 1931 to Feb 1932) £1.50 incl. postage.
BING CROSBY: MUSIC THAT SATISFIES 1933 radio £1.50.
(Two discogs. purchased together £2.70 incld. post)
Send SAE for complete list of imported special items of all artists..

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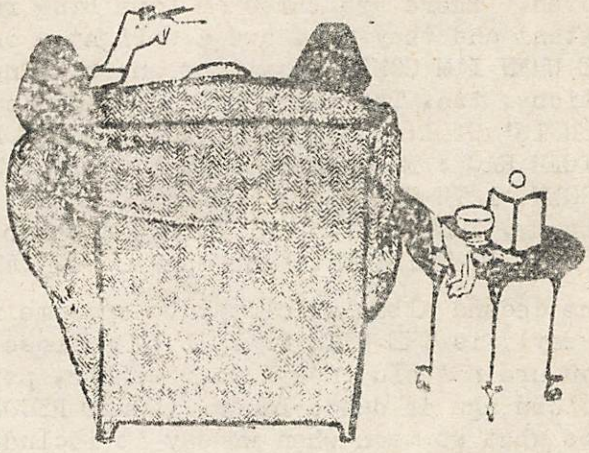
PHIL CLARKE, SOUTHERN BING CROSBY CLUB, now lives at 150a Hart Plain Aven., Cowplain, Hants PO8 8QP and was the victim of a burglary which cost him more than £3,000 of uninsured equipment. He tells us his club is continuing but under a different format in that meetings will now be only TWICE a year - the next is the FIRST SUNDAY IN MAY; thence first Sunday in Oct. Members in the North-East should contact either JOHN JOYCE, 21 Birchfield Gdns., Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, OR BOB JONES, 39 Gladstone Str., Hebburn, Tyne & Wear to attend their regular and highly successful social functions.

In the Midlands, contact G.R.T (Tom)Evans, 84 Brereton Rd., NEW INVENTION, Willenhall, Staffs, OR Don Small, One Lea View, Willenhall, Staffs with a view to joining their social (and charitable) events.

John Bassett, 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex holds meetings at his home; send SAE for details if the area is convenient.

REGRET THIS ISSUE CONTAINS TWO PAGES 38! The first should, of course, be 36. Reading continuity is not affected - just one of those things!

# KEEPING *track*



Well, did you evah? seems to be the most apposite phrase as we embark on this feature. We are, in fact, assailed by at least three characters, peering over our shoulder. Two from Dickensian fiction and the third from nursery mythology. To wit, in the record line we are the eternal Oliver Twist, coming back for more; then again, we resemble Mr. Micawber, desperately waiting for something to turn up. But to underline the opening gambit, the nusery mythology is in the ascendant for as we survey the record scene we know precisely how poor old Mother Hubbard felt when she opened the cupboard door and found it conspicuously lacking in content!

To wit, we have no records of which to keep track. Well, not quite. There have been some what might be called 'irritating' issues by which we mean one scarce track esconsed between multifarious offerings, few of which appeal to us. True, we told in the previous issue of the Louis Armstrong's 20 GOLDEN GREATS on A Warwick (£5.49) which included two Bing and one Gary offering. Then there was LET'S DO IT on an MCA issue. The album entitled MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS contained just AROUND THE WORLD from Bing (Ronco RTL 2062). And around Christmas there appeared another Ronco collection, MISTY MORNINGS (RTL 2066) which contained just one Bing track - ROCK OF AGES! A rare selection indeed. Yet another is HOLLYWOOD SINGS and this really stretches things for tho' the sleeve shows a picture of Bing and proclaims his name, the solitary track is HAPPY FEET with the RHYTYM BOYS from 1930. All these issues mean - if you are inclined and affluent - that you pay a lot of money for one track. Unless, that is, you can put up with the other artists featured. But one can learn: I never knew that Joan Crawford, for instance, recorded HOW LONG WILL IT LAST - with Gus Arnheim and his Orchestra!

It can certainly be argued that 'economic recession' - what a euphemism! - is hardly conducive to record issues, especially what might be termed 'specialist' issues as Bing's might now be considered, believing that records are a 'luxury'.

So, may we crave indulgence and slightly bend our usually inviolate rules and mention a couple of NON-Bing albums - but they are Bing-by-association! We all have our regrets about Bing not recording this, that or the other. One of my real regrets is that he never made an album with that eccentric outfit, THE FIREHOUSE FIVE PLUS 2! A collection of Hollywood writers, technicians, etc. who play for the love of it. And it always shows. Now MUSIC FOR PLEASURE have surprisingly brought out GOOD TIME JAZZ by this outfit, MFP 50533 £1.99p)

For this writer, a gem. Happy-go-lucky music fully living up to its title. No lofty, arty, jazz approach, just good foot-tapping - and humorous music for marching, dancing - or listening. The music Bing clearly loved. There are three or four Bing radio tracks with the Firehouse 5 + 2 extant and they too, are a delight - one of them, PLEASE DON'T TALK ABOUT ME WHEN I'M GONE, providing one of Bing's most spontaneous vocal improvisations, too. The album has 20 tracks and how Bing would have loved it all - RUNNIN' WILD: FIVE FOOT TWO: SWANEE RIVER: CALIFORNIA HERE I COME : TIGER RAG : EVERYBODY LOVES MY BABY : SHEIK OF ARABY : SWEET GEORGIA BROWN, 12TH ST. RAG : MUSKRATE RAMBLE : THAT'S A'PLENTY and one real beauty, JUST A STOMP AT TWILIGHT which (naturally) turns out to be JUST A SONG AT TWILIGHT. And many more. Ah Bing, if only.....

The second album which may be of some interest and is Bing-associated (in a way!) is THE HITS OF 1931 by Ambrose & his Orchestra - which was, if you are not old enough to remember, perhaps Britain's finest band in the golden age of dance bands, (WORLD RECORDS; 'RETROSPECT' £3.99p). You will see what we mean when we say it includes I SURRENDER, DEAR; OUT OF NOWHERE; IT MUST BE TRUE; I'M GONNA GET YOU, WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS; JUST ONE MORE CHANCE; and FOR YOU. The numbers are beautifully played. Indeed, the band sounds remarkably like the Gus Arnheim Orch at times. It was comprised of Britain's leading dance band musicians. The big snag - again - is that the vocals are not by Bing but by Sam Browne, who enjoyed a big reputation as a British vocalist with both Jack Hylton andAmbrose - as well as other bands. Its interesting to hear how Bing's big numbers of that year were treated here.

We can only hope that Decca, MCA/EMI or CBS, READERS DIGEST, WORLD RECORDS have something up their sleeve for us....meanwhile perhaps a glance thro' LEGEND MUSIC on p. 46 will ease the barren-ness of the scene...

# BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 8013, Tacoma, Washington 98408, U.S.A.

This society, as we've said before, was formed in 1977 mainly through the devotion, diligence and inspiration of KEN TWISS, now its President. Support has since been forthcoming from an impressive list of supporters and we're delighted that so many UK members are supporting the Society. Subscription is 10.00 dollars per year - tho' donations of all kinds are welcome. The aims of the Society are to focus on the art and life of the great Bing and his family via all the avenues his incredible career encompassed. The Society does not pretend to issue a magazine as such - believing there are already excellent publications - but does issue an interesting newsletter to keep members up-to-date with progress. Its biggest aim and ambition is to acquire, when it falls vacant, Bing's birthplace to serve as a headquarters, museum etc. We hope in the future to be able to add tangible aid to this excellent project. Those interested - and able - to help should write to KEN TWISS, as above.

Now, we don't want to stray into uncharted waters, or delve into things we may not fully understand, but so many members in Britain have told us they are somewhat disconcerted that little on the State, or even National, level is projected in America, allowing for the valiant efforts already described. Some cultural Congress Committee, it is felt, may have interested themselves in perpetuating Bing's memory. True, other big stars have in the natural course of events, passed from this earth and it will be argued that National institutions cannot be envisaged for all of them. But we cannot help wondering if those in America who could really help in this direction really appreciate what this famous son of their Continent achieved? With monumental recordings, films, radio, TV, sport in the way of fishing, golf, safaris - but best of all as an enduring ambassador of goodwill for America. One has only to consider Der Bingle, dear 'ol Bing, Le Bing, El Bing to know that truly there was no one like Bing Crosby.